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The Week

PRESIDENT Roosevelt and General Johnson have at last broken the log jam in regard to codes for the fundamental industries. Using every possible form of pressure, the government succeeded last Saturday in getting codes signed for steel, oil and lumber. It is expected that the coal code will be adopted within a few days, perhaps before this issue of The New Republic appears, and the automobile agreement will follow shortly thereafter. The codes for steel and oil are for a try-out period of ninety days, and the same device is likely to be adopted regarding the others. It is well that this is so: the codes represent a compromise on nearly every important detail except the insistence on genuine collective bargaining, and some of the terms, as we point out elsewhere in this issue, are thoroughly bad. The wages are so low, the hours so long, that they hold out little substantial hope of additional employment or any such increase in consumer purchasing power as is necessary to make the N.R.A. a success.

SO FAR as we can judge from the record, the administration seems largely to have abandoned its original plan to have wages which are already higher than the minimum increased by at least as many dollars as are added to the pay of the lowest group. It has apparently found its hands so full getting collective bargaining and some sort of possible standard of wages and hours that this whole tremendously important question of general increases has gone by the board, though rates per hour are increased when hours are shortened without pay cuts. To be sure, with real unions in the field, the workers can to some extent take care of their own wages and hours. In retrospect, it may prove to have been sound tactics for the government to get industry into some sort of agreement—any sort of agreement—first, and then proceed by continuous process of readjustment, to make wages and hours what they ought to be. No one can now say whether this will prove to be the case.

IT IS certainly an important piece of progress that the Roosevelt government should now be standing wholeheartedly behind a policy of independent and aggressive trade unionism, and it is a development which few would have predicted on the fourth of last March. When the N.I.R.A. was written, the intention was to maintain a nice impartiality among company unions, real unions and none; and General Johnson began his work in this attitude. He speedily found it impossible to remain on the fence, however, and it is to his great credit, and that of President Roosevelt, that both of them finally came over to the side of labor. But the battle is not ended: indeed, it is only beginning. Everything now depends upon how the Act is administered. There can be no doubt that most of the workers in the leading industries, and especially in the fundamental ones listed above, want independent and aggressive unions. There can also be no doubt that the employers intend to break their word to the government if they can, and prevent the organization of their men. In this juncture the government will have to step in and protect the union members in the exercise of their legal rights. If this is not

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done, the government will have broken its word and conspired to violate the terms of its own law.

FROM the beginning of the Roosevelt experiment many observers, friendly and otherwise, have believed that it was attempting to do half of a job which must be done completely or not at all—that either the government must go forward into some form of state capitalism, or it must remove its partial controls and let the country return to the anarchy of individualism. For this reason, particular interest attaches to the oil code, where overproduction has been wasting a precious natural resource and bringing about ruinously low prices. Some oil men wanted rigid government control of both production and prices; others wanted a hands-off policy. The customary compromise has produced a situation where the President, with the aid of an advisory organization, will fix basic prices and "suggest" to the various oil-producing states what he considers desirable annual quotas. Hardly any industry could have been selected for an experiment in price-fixing where the difficulties are greater than they are in oil. The current overproduction is estimated at 500,000 barrels *a day*. The price of crude oil has fallen to sixty cents a barrel, and experts believe that without the hope of a price fixed by the government it would have fallen to twenty-five. Tremendous pressure will be brought upon the oil administration to have it set a price for gasoline which will permit an excessive margin of profit—if the price of spot gasoline is fixed at six cents a gallon, as is generally expected, the price of crude oil will nearly double—and the big producers and refiners, who have enormous stocks of it in storage, will be receiving a government gift of millions. The small refiners, with little storage space, are likely to be driven out of business. While the President is able to forbid interstate shipments of oil which are in excess of his suggested statewide quotas, it is obvious that bootlegging is likely to take place on a large scale. Desperate conditions probably require desperate remedies; but it must be said that if price fixing will work in oil at the present time, it ought to work almost anywhere.

PUTTING together all the reports of famine and bumper crops that have recently come out of Russia, one is forced to conclude that everybody is starving in the midst of plenty, that the harvest is the biggest in history but that people doggedly refuse to eat it, and that the Communist government is about to be overthrown by the mass enthusiasm of its citizens for Communism. But if one analyzes instead of combining the reports, one obtains a much less contradictory picture. It now seems certain that last winter's food situation was more serious than the Soviet authorities were willing to admit. There was a shortage of bread and meat extending over wide areas, especially in the Ukraine, the North Caucasus and the lower Volga. It is probable that many people starved to death. On the other hand, the present harvest is undoubtedly the best in many years—some peasants report a heavier yield of grain than any their forefathers had known since 1834. Grain deliveries to the government are proceeding at a very satisfactory rate, and the price of bread has fallen sharply in the industrial towns of the Ukraine. In view of these facts the appeal of the Cardinal Archbishop of Vienna for assistance for Russian famine victims seems to be a political maneuver against the Soviets. It is true, however, that the difficulties are not yet ended, and will not be ended until the whole harvest has been distributed. Bread prices in Moscow have risen instead of falling. It is reported that the government has refused permission to American correspondents to travel through the grain-producing regions. If this last report is true, we feel that the Soviets are making a blunder. No matter how serious conditions may be, it is better to have them described accurately by an observer on the scene than to have them magnified 10,000 diameters by the telescopes of those modern astrologers who run the lie factories in Bucharest and Riga.

THE Austro-German conflict is fast becoming an international issue of major importance, in which the spoils will go to the winner in the race between France and Italy for domination over the nations of the Danube. France justly fears, both for political and economic reasons, any solution of the question that will strengthen the power of Central Europe. For France, a Greater Germany would not merely constitute a permanent military menace; such a Germany, coöperating with Italy, would mean the end of the valuable French trade connections in the Balkan states. Mussolini, on the other hand, seems convinced that Austria cannot long withstand the pressure of Nazi Germany from without, and its growing National Socialist movement from within. Reports are unanimous that the economic situation of Austria is going from bad to worse. Tourist trade, its most profitable industry, is practically at a standstill. During July, just three Germans crossed the German-Austrian border, since Germany demands a fee of a thousand marks for every passport to Austria. Six hundred and fifty hotels and inns have had to close their doors during the last six weeks. The famous Salzburg festival was a financial catastrophe. Exports have reached the vanishing point and the Austrian treasury is practically depleted. The Italian Premier is playing his game with admirable shrewdness. After Dollfuss left Rome last week, it was at first reported that Italy, France and Great Britain had agreed to prevent by force of arms military aggression by Germany or a National Socialist uprising in Austria itself. This report was promptly repudiated by Rome, and Austria hastened to confirm the denial.

THE effrontery with which German agitators continued their provocative radio propaganda across the Austrian border strongly suggests that the Reich

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has come to an understanding with Mussolini. When the Duce refused to unite with Great Britain and France in their representations to the Hitler government and held "friendly private conversations" with Baron von Neurath, he was presumably playing a double game. His assurance to the two Powers that Germany had promised to stop its offensive agitation against the Dollfuss government appears to have been a subterfuge to gain time for his National Socialist allies. The same tendency is manifest in his attitude toward Austria's request that it be permitted to increase its army by 8,000 men to protect its German border. France immediately expressed its willingness to grant this request, but stated that it would resist a similar demand from Germany, while Italy insisted that Austria, Germany and Hungary should all receive equal consideration. Germany's announcement that it would withdraw its auxiliary police of 12,000 Storm Troopers on August 15 was unquestionably calculated to spike Austria's claim. On this the great Powers are agreed, that at least an economic union of some kind must be brought about among Austria, Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Jugoslavia, if these nations are to continue their national existence. Whether France or Italy shall dominate this economic union and what role Germany is to play in this combination of nations are the questions that the coming months must answer. It is only certain that the struggle for the domination of Central Europe is growing more intense.

ON Sunday morning, August 13, three Negroes were lynched near Tuscaloosa, Alabama. One of them miraculously escaped death, but was recaptured when a doctor was called to a cabin to treat his wounds. Southern newspapers were indignant at the crime: "There is blood," they said, "on the seal of Alabama." A speedy investigation was ordered, and on Tuesday a grand jury met to consider indictments. But the place of its meeting was significant. Although the Negroes were kidnaped in Jefferson County and murdered in Bibb County, there was no investigation in Bibb or Jefferson. Instead the grand jury assembled in Tuscaloosa, where the county officials were obviously guilty of negligence in not preventing the lynching—they have even been charged with helping to bring it about. The jury was composed of Tuscaloosa business men—that is, of people of the same class and the same town as the "dozen masked men" against whom they were being not very urgently asked to find indictments. In charge of the investigation for the state was Attorney General Thomas E. Knight, Jr., who, in the Scottsboro case, did not distinguish himself by sympathy with the Negro or eagerness to right his wrongs. Judge Henry B. Foster called the jury. Instead of presiding, he might have been asked some questions himself—as, for example, why he first denied and then admitted that he had ordered the three Negroes to be taken out of the Tuscaloosa jail.

THE whole investigation seems to have been conducted in a spirit of high futility. Solicitor Edward De Graffenreid, who presented the evidence, said in regard to clues that there was "nothing exactly definite." Elmore Clarke, the surviving Negro, was still in the custody of the county authorities and said nothing that reflected against them. The two deputy sheriffs from whom the prisoners were taken testified that they could not recognize any of the masked men and could not take down the license numbers of the lynchers' two automobiles because "the plates had been turned upside down." The bodies of the two murdered Negroes were exhumed—but it was announced that the twenty-five or more slugs which killed them had been "taken as souvenirs." Sheriff R. L. Shamblin announced that the throng of spectators at the spot of the murder "obliterated footprints or other possible marks of identification." Nobody seems to have asked any embarrassing questions. Nobody thought of calling the known leader of the Tuscaloosa mob, which, two weeks before, attempted to lynch three lawyers of the International Labor Defense. On Thursday, August 17, the grand jury recessed without making a report. It will meet again on September 4, but there is no expectation that it will bring any indictments. There is blood on the seal of Alabama, and nobody is trying hard to wash it off.

ON August 10 the John Day Company published a biography of Andrew W. Mellon, by Harvey O'Connor, entitled "Mellon's Millions." The book has already been commended by many critics, and on the day of publication a number of the country's leading newspapers carried stories on some of the book's allegations. In Pittsburgh, Mellon's home town, the Scripps-Howard paper carried a front-page story and a full-page review. The other two papers likewise carried reviews, although they were much less conspicuous. The next day Mr. Mellon issued a statement in which he described the $2,500 million fortune attributed to him as "senseless" and in which he branded the book as "literary racketeering." He did not dispute the central thesis that one family has in the course of two generations effected monopolistic control of so many services and utilities that it now exercises virtual domination over millions of people, including those people's local and state government. It was not necessary for him to say much. The master's voice was heard and heeded. The Legal Journal came out with a scathing denunciation of the book without, by its own admission, having read it. The Pittsburgher, a sheet published by the Mellon-controlled political machine and distributed free from house to house, discovered that Mr. O'Connor is a Communist. One local columnist prayed for a bonfire such as only Mr. Hitler could stage. But worst of all, the bookstores began to boycott the book. Only one shop—Jones' Book Store—carries a fully display. Two of the largest department stores do not carry it at all, thus lending weight to the long-persisting

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rumor that the Mellons have recently dipped their fingers into department-store ownership. The rest of the stores dig the book out from an obscure corner only when asked for it. Thus Pittsburgh lives up to the ancient wheeze, "If you want to know who's boss around here, start something."

WHAT threatened for a time to be merely quiet sabotage has now turned into open warfare in at least one sector of the administration's war on the depression. The attack centers on the Home Owners' Loan Corporation. As was expected by most observers, and predicted in these pages, the vast majority of mortgage lenders, even among those who are legally able to accept the debenture bonds offered by the government agency, refuse to meddle with them save in the most hopeless cases. The reason advanced is that the principal of the bonds is not guaranteed. Neither is there a guarantee of principal—or interest for that matter—in the present status of the distressed mortgages that are likely to seek refinancing under the administration's scheme. No guarantee is effective unless the security behind it is marketable or otherwise readily convertible into cash. As long as the real-estate market remains in its present static condition, and as long as rents continue to be depressed, no mortgage is guaranteed, and foreclosure only means a transfer of responsibility for taxes and repairs from borrower to lender. In an era characterized by government interference in industry and tending in the direction of socialized control of one sort or another, the effort to sustain the status of rugged individualism, which home-ownership undoubtedly represents, is a curious anomaly and one which will probably in the end defeat itself.

AS AN immediate emergency, however, the set-up is the best that could be devised without adding to the already heavy burden of government debt. It offers the home owner a postponement of his misery and to the lender it offers a chance for at least partial recovery in the midst of existing and possibly increasing chaos. The bonds are not debentures in the strict sense of the word. They have behind them the same property which now constitutes the security and they have guaranteed interest besides. If the typical lender really believes, as he so often professes to, in the future of America, he should have no fear of accepting bonds for 80 percent of the most depressed real-estate valuation in the history of the country. Instead, the conservative press from coast to coast has, within the last week or two, started a move to defend the poor defenseless lender against what they term a "joker" in the law. By this they mean the clause which says that the bonds "shall be fully and unconditionally guaranteed as to interest *only*." It is not a joker. It is not something put over on the lender or the public, but rather constitutes the most deliberate and the most fought-over provision of the law. The warfare waged now against the provision and the set-up in general is an effort to counteract the pressure which state and federal governments are exerting against foreclosures. Perhaps a little of the co-operation and patriotism expected of the corner grocer and of the coal miner would not go amiss if forced upon mortgage lenders.

The Consumer and the N.R.A.

THE resignation of Professor William F. Ogburn from the Consumers' Advisory Board of the N.R.A. has served a useful purpose in concentrating attention upon an important and hitherto neglected aspect of the problem with which Washington is dealing. This, it should be noted, was Professor Ogburn's purpose. His resignation was a patriotic act. He felt, and as it turned out correctly, that by this dramatic gesture he could persuade public interest to rest, however briefly, upon the dilemma of the consumer and thereby help prepare the ground for a necessary task which has not yet been faced with all its implications.

That task, stated in its crudest terms, is, How to prevent prices from rising out of all proportion to the increase in consumer purchasing power which, it is hoped, will come with reëmployment and with the wage increases that the government is now fighting to create? How to prevent deterioration in quality of consumers' goods at a time when the normal competitive system of the past is so largely suspended? How to prevent conscienceless profiteering on the part of producers with a semi-monopolistic position, or those who for various reasons enjoy lower production costs than the average?

First of all it should be noted that some suffering on the part of some consumers is a necessary part of the administration's plan. In a period of rising prices, wages and salaries almost always lag behind the increase in the cost of living, and bring at least a temporary curtailment of purchasing power. Those classes or individuals who are unable for one reason or another to obtain any increase at all in money income during such a period are of course particularly hard hit. The same thing is true of the results of deliberate inflation, such as the United States has not yet witnessed under the Roosevelt administration. In the German inflation of 1923, the fixed-income group was almost reduced to beggary—and the Nazi regime of today is partially the result of the situation then developed. At the very best, Mr. Roosevelt's plans demand that some people be pinched, for a certain period of time. We shall be lucky if the number is not large, the time long and the pinch excessive.

There is, of course, one important element to counteract this tendency. The rise in prices has thus far been a speculative one, based on the expectation of inflation or a large rise in consumer purchasing power, or both. The bulk of the new manufactured goods will reach the retailers beginning approximately November first. If consumer purchasing

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power is not then prepared to enter the market in very large volume, these prices will speedily fall and unless drastic measures are taken to prevent it, we shall find ourselves again in the vicious downward spiral of declining sales, reduced production, dwindling employment and the dreary cycle of hunger and despair which we have witnessed for the past four years.

It is astonishing to what an extent public discussion of this problem has assumed that consumers and workers are two separate classes in the community. Many people, quite unconsciously, write and speak as though spending were a function of the middle class while wages paid to labor disappeared into some magic sink hole. Intelligent people should know that this is not true; that the overwhelming mass of the American people work for their living, receiving wages, or salaries, or cash for farm products. The question of raising farm prices is a separate one which need not be considered here except to note that the government is now embarked upon a vast program for the purpose of increasing the farmer's purchasing power. For most of the rest of us, the question becomes one of causing wages and salaries to rise in some sort of reasonable proportion with the rise in prices.

It must be said at once that thus far, this is the weakest aspect of the Roosevelt program. A division of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration exists which is attempting to see that food prices do not get out of line, under the direction of Dr. Frederic C. Howe, known for many years as a worker in progressive movements. His first efforts, concentrated upon the price of bread, have achieved at least a temporary success. In regard to the separate organization to watch prices in general Professor Ogburn's criticism is well justified. The machinery is obviously and appallingly incompetent for the task by which it is confronted. It lacks any adequate standards by which to say whether profiteering exists in regard to any commodity. It lacks a tremendous volume of urgently necessary statistical information. Its legal authority to enforce its findings is dubious, to say the least. The main present weapon, both for the Consumers' Advisory Board and for Dr. Howe's organization, is publicity. The profiteer is to be denounced publicly as a scoundrel; his goods or services are to be boycotted (although that ugly sounding word is studiously avoided); he will become ashamed of himself, and reduce his profits to a reasonable margin. That is the theory; and anyone who can remember back as far as fifteen years ago, knows that it won't work. Not only are we sure to see instances of grave injustice in special cases, including the satisfaction of private grudges through public denunciation, as we did during the War, but all past experience shows that these great moral crusades are inevitably a failure. They fail because it is impossible in a time of rising prices, as we have already suggested, to distinguish between legitimate increases due to enhanced costs and illegitimate ones, due to piggishness. They fail also because such a great proportion of the purchases of the average American family are made from necessity, and cannot be postponed or omitted in order to participate in a boycott on a profiteer.

On this subject, as on so many others, President Roosevelt's official family is far from being a unit. Some of its members believe that if the whole experiment is a success, prosperity will have been restored, and we need not worry about profiteering, any more than we did during the "golden era" of 1925-29. (A partial answer to this theory is that even during those years, whole industries were sick and millions of Americans lived under conditions of disgraceful poverty.) Others among the President's advisers believe that having begun an experiment in social control of our economic life, we must inevitably go forward to complete that control: that the government must decide what is a fair return to capital in any industry, and then see to it that the prices prevailing in that industry are such, after allowing for decent labor conditions, as will earn no more than this reasonable return. To be sure, the brain reels at the thought of the necessary governmental bookkeeping; and the past quarter century of attempts to control public-utility rates through this scheme are such as to justify an extremely pessimistic attitude. But there seems no alternative—except of course to go forward to that complete socialization for which this policy might well prove only the prelude. We can paraphrase Lincoln and say that, economically, the country cannot exist half controlled and half in anarchy.

A New Latin American Shuffle

THE Roosevelt administration's foreign policy is now focused wholly on Latin America. Mr. Roosevelt is jubilant at the recent turn of events in Cuba, and regards the comparatively peaceful ousting of Machado as a major triumph. The present Cuban executive, Señor de Cespedes, was handpicked by Ambassador Welles, and is apparently pledged to follow the dictates of our State Department. The unsavory Haitian mess has been largely cleaned up by Mr. Roosevelt's categorical promise to withdraw our marines in 1934. Negotiations begin this week with Colombia for a new commercial treaty. Trade talks with Brazil and Argentina are scheduled to start within another month. The administration seemingly intends to make the Seventh Pan-American Conference, to be held next December at Montevideo, Uruguay, a full-dress demonstration of our commercial and political primacy in Latin America. A heavy agenda has been proposed, and our delegation to Montevideo is to be headed by Secretary of State Hull.

The enthusiasm of Mr. Roosevelt and his advisers for Latin America has undoubtedly been heightened by the failure of the World Economic

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Conference. Before the Conference started, there were great hopes in Washington that England, at least, would join with us in a world inflationary program. Mr. MacDonald, on his visit to Washington in April, was believed to have agreed tentatively to such a plan. The subsequent unbending hostility displayed by the British at London to all Mr. Roosevelt's proposals came as a disappointing surprise. At present, the administration seems to want no further dealings with Europe. When Mr. Henry Morgenthau, Sr., recently declared that Europe was doing nothing to solve its problems, and was moving rapidly towards another great war, he was expressing a view quite generally held in Washington.

We have here two tendencies, one towards an active policy in Latin America, the other away from coöperation with Europe. They form a dangerous mixture. We certainly ought to stop to consider what we have to gain in Latin America, and what we have to lose in Europe. The joyous preparations for the Montevideo Conference in Washington already have begun to arouse resentment in Europe, and to make it altogether sure that the World Economic Conference, even in an abbreviated form, will never meet again. More particularly, alarm and bitterness seem to be mounting steadily in England. The British will never sit by passively and permit us to increase our share of the Argentinian market. That much can be taken as certain. We need to pause and consider whether we are ready to risk an imperialistic race with England. For the last ten years, England and ourselves, as the two greatest financial and naval powers, have been the chief element of stability in a none too stable world. Do we wish this partnership to continue? It must be emphasized that no questions of right or wrong are involved. America and England, in their relations to other nations, have been and are selfish, imperialistic predatory. However, ever since the World War they have managed to maintain, between themselves, a sort of bandits' partnership, in the Far East, in Europe, and in central-bank management and international lending, and in naval armaments. We have to decide whether or not this bandits' partnership is preferable to the utter international anarchy which will ensue if America and England are permitted to drift into out-and-out rivalry in Latin America.

A little consideration will make it clear that an aggressive Latin American trade policy by the Roosevelt administration necessarily means a collision with England. Latin America is divided into four great political areas—Central America, Brazil, Chile and the South American west coast and, finally, Argentina. About the first three of these areas, no dispute is likely to arise. Central America, including Cuba, is everywhere recognized as part of the Yankee empire, and the other powers have long since resigned themselves to keep off. Brazil, likewise, is now considered by Europe our territory. Coffee forms 90 percent of Brazil's exports, and we are the great coffee topers of the world. Brazil's prosperity depends chiefly upon us, and lately we have been able to force Brazil into a tighter and tighter commercial relationship. As for Chile, its exports of "natural" nitrates are swiftly dwindling to nothing, and it seems possible that Chile may soon virtually disappear from international trade.

The only important Latin American market in which we have not yet obtained about everything we want is Argentina. If the Roosevelt administration is to achieve any substantial advance in its present Latin American campaign, it must be made in Argentina. Argentina, however, "belongs" to England. For more than a century, that country has been one of England's vital markets. Now there is every reason to think that the Roosevelt administration has the deliberate intention of challenging England in Argentina.

Last spring, the English concluded a trade treaty with Argentina providing that the sterling exchange resulting from Argentina's sales of beef, wheat and hides to England was to be segregated, and allotted only to importers wishing to buy English goods. England takes about 35 percent of all Argentinian exports, and recently has been selling to Argentina, principally because of American competition, only about 20 percent of its imports. The treaty was designed to compel Argentinians, in the future, to buy as much from England as they sell to it. In practice, this will inevitably mean a shift of Argentinian purchases from us to England, perhaps as much as $50 million worth annually.

This treaty between England and Argentina can be justified on no economic or ethical grounds. No "right" to sell goods to Argentina is vested in Britain. If the citizens of Argentina wish to use their English credits to buy cheap automobiles, tires, electrical appliances and radios in the United States, there is no reason why they should not have the chance to do so. This English-Argentinian treaty is an extreme expression of present-day economic nationalism. There is no obligation upon us to like it. But there is great doubt whether it is wise for us to retaliate.

It is apparent, however, that our State Department has been writhing under this English-Argentinian treaty, which it regards as a defeat and humiliation. Mr. Roosevelt has personally interested himself in the possibilities of obtaining sufficient concessions from Argentina to offset the British advantages. This is evidently to be the chief objective of our delegation at the Montevideo Conference. However, Mr. Roosevelt and the State Department should recognize that England will oppose us bitterly. For ten years now, responsible political leaders of England have had a fixed nightmare: that they were going to lose their Argentinian market to the United States, and their Indian market to Japan. They fear, perhaps correctly, that England could not survive

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the loss of these two markets and remain a great nation. To British Tories, Argentina and India symbolize their country's continued life. Fifty million dollars' worth of Argentinian trade is, certainly, $50 million worth of trade, but it is folly to think it is worth a lasting break with England. Here, it seems obvious, is an opportunity for a first application of that planned and controlled international trade which all good economists now agree is a necessary corollary of the planned domestic economy upon which so many nations are—in one way or another—at present embarking.

The Story of a Crime

SACCO and Vanzetti were executed for the murder at South Braintree on April 15, 1920, of a paymaster and his guard. That they were guilty of this crime and the attendant robbery of the payroll carried by the murdered men was the solemn pronouncement of Massachusetts justice, through its judiciary, its Governor and a special commission. There was put to death with them, for another murder and robbery, a man who had given the clue which seems to designate those actually guilty of the crime for which Sacco and Vanzetti were electrocuted. This clue was never investigated by the Massachusetts authorities. In an endeavor to obtain a new trial, counsel for the defendants fully explored it. And the remarkable evidence they discovered was presented in turn to Judge Thayer, the Massachusetts Supreme Court, the Lowell Commission and Governor Fuller. All of these rejected the story (except the higher court, which refused to review it at all), largely on the ground that Madeiros, the informant, was unreliable. In so far as they considered the corroborating evidence they either misstated it or failed to grasp its significance.

According to the version of the South Braintree crime which official Massachusetts refused to investigate, it was the work of a gang of Providence criminals headed by several of the brothers Morelli. These gangsters had been indicted for theft of railway shipments from two shoe factories in South Braintree, the payroll of one of which was the objective of the robbery charged to Sacco and Vanzetti. Most of the members of the gang were out on bail awaiting trial and in need of funds for their defense when the murders at South Braintree were committed.

Joe Morelli resembled Sacco, and one of his companions fitted the description of the pale, sickly driver of the bandit car noticed by numerous persons at South Braintree. Morelli owned a pistol of the make and caliber that fired the bullet which killed the guard; another member of the gang had one of the peculiar foreign make that fired the other bullets found at the scene of the crime. There were at liberty enough members of the group to account for all those observed at the time of the murder. Madeiros' story explained the two strange automobiles seen in South Braintree early on the morning of April 15 and the delay in the movements of the escaping bandit car which has been noted by all students of this case, a delay due, Madeiros claimed, to a change made in some woods from the one car to the other. Evidence unearthed by the defense in 1926 indicates that suspicion of connection with the crime was almost at once directed toward these very men in New Bedford, where they were unfavorably known to the police, and that a few days after the murders a member of the Morelli gang showed distinct signs of consciousness of guilt when approached by an officer, giving a false account of his automobile, and trying to draw a pistol.

All these details, and others besides, were urged in behalf of Sacco and Vanzetti by their able and devoted counsel, William G. Thompson and Herbert B. Ehrmann. They are now presented to the general public by Mr. Ehrmann, who was largely responsible for first fitting together the mosaic picture. In "The Untried Case" (The Vanguard Press) he tells how he came on one bit of evidence after another, and unfolds, with the swiftness of a detective story, the significance of each detail. No new facts are presented. But the weight to which each item is entitled in the chain of accusation against Joe Morelli and his associates is developed with great skill. It is hard to believe that an unbiased jury would fail to convict upon such evidence.

Will the facts and arguments which failed to save Sacco and Vanzetti carry weight with the present chastened public? Will they convince it, not only that these men were innocent, but also that the courts of 1933 are equally liable to err in any case involving class or race prejudice? The fish peddler and the shoemaker have been dead for six years. Mooney is still in prison; the Scottsboro boys, with the evidence against them exploded, are awaiting a new trial for a crime of which few either believe them to be guilty or expect them to be acquitted. Must these, too, be vindicated from beyond the grave?

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A Report on Coal

[*The following article is a somewhat abbreviated form of the address on the status of the coal industry delivered by Dr. Alexander Sachs, Director of the Division of Research and Planning of the National Recovery Administration, at the hearing in Washington on the code for the coal industry. The New Republic presents it, not only for its intrinsic interest but because it indicates in broad outlines the basis upon which future regulation of the coal industry may be expected to rest.*—THE EDITORS.]

THE PROBLEM of the coal industry is not a product of the present great depression. Depression in coal—progressive unemployment and loss of business and profits—has been with us throughout the preceding decade of industrial prosperity and even during the boom; coal was like the mummy carried around with the various courses at an Egyptian banquet. Since the War the coal industry has been overexpanded, has been in a continuous state of warfare and all three parties —owners, workmen and for part of the time consumers—have complained that they were not getting their due. The coal industry has been not only overdeveloped, but also underorganized, undermanaged and underplanned in relation to the problems which have confronted it in the post-war period and which confront it today.

The much discussed "coal problem" is only one of the end-products of our national policies, or lack of policies, relating to the ownership and development of the country's natural resources. The United States possesses approximately half of the coal resources in the world, and except for relatively inaccessible portions of the public domain in the Rocky Mountains, practically all of this vast storehouse is privately owned. Measured in terms of annual needs, these reserves represent hundreds of years of supply. But under unregulated and unplanned competition, the present generation of owners has sought to reduce these resource assets into current income.

In many cases the burden of coal-land taxes and of carrying charges on investments already incurred compels owners to develop properties without regard to the economic timeliness of their exploitation. Though not so destructive economically as the law of capture applied to the oil resources, the coal industry, nevertheless, has fostered excess capacity and overproduction compared with consumptive demand, has forced low prices for coal which have resulted in starvation wages for workers, and in combination with other forces it has led to an attrition of earning power for capital and the wearing down of the wage level.

The causes of the chaos in the bituminous coal industry in the past decade may be listed as follows:

(1) An excess capacity stimulated by the Great War.

(2) Transportation differentials uncoördinated and inequitable in terms of the whole economy and the use of the fuel in the varying markets.

(3) Wage differentials uncoördinated and inequitable in terms of the whole economy from the point of view both of competing operators and competing workers.

(4) Uneven technological improvements in coal production in the various fields, which unequally increased supplies. This tendency to overproduction was in turn fostered and aggravated by the wage and freight differentials.

(5) Technological economies in the use of coal which have continuously and markedly reduced the demand.

(6) Revolutionary technical displacements of the demand and the outlets for coal through the development of competitive fuels under conditions of competitive and wasteful exploitation of natural resources.

(7) Legal restraints hitherto existing which prevented agreements for the organization of the industry, the marketing of the product, and the balancing of production with consumption and coördination of such balanced production with that of substitute and competing fuels.

The condition of overdevelopment in the bituminous coal industry dates back many years. It existed before the War, as is shown by the fact that in the twenty years ending with 1913 the mines were worked only 213 days out of a possible 308. Among the causes of overdevelopment were:

(1) The great abundance of the natural resource, accessible at small cost.

(2) The common-law concept which transferred ownership of minerals with the original grant of the surface land, causing title to the underlying reserves to pass into the hands of some millions of separate owners, each of whom naturally wanted to profit from his ownership.

(3) Pressure on the operator to open additional mines in order to meet carrying charges on his investment.

(4) A system of freight rates which favored development of remote localities through low charges per ton-mile.

(5) Periodic shortage of railroad cars, which drove prices to attractive levels and induced further development.

(6) Biennial strikes or suspensions in the union fields, which stimulated expansion in the non-union areas of the South.

To this general picture must be added the in-

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fluence of unusual external and internal factors. The World War created a shortage of coal which was due not to lack of mine capacity but to the strikes and the congestion of transport. The resulting increase in prices caused a large increase in the number of mines, the attachment of great numbers of workers to the industry and enormous expansion in capacity. Thus the War gave a stimulus to coal mining from which the industry cannot be said ever to have fully recovered.

Capacity reached its peak in 1923. In 1923 coal was being produced in ninety-two commercial fields in thirty-two states and Alaska. Many of the fields had been developed in regions relatively remote from markets and could continue to exist only by paying wages lower than the rates prevailing in the fields lying closer to the markets. In the year 1923 there were 9,331 commercial mines in operation (not to mention thousands of wagon mines) and the capacity was sufficient to produce 970 million tons a year. Since the highest production ever absorbed was only 579 million tons, reached at the height of the War, so great an excess above marketable demand rendered inevitable the liquidation, deflation and disinvestment process which ensued. Between 1923 and 1931 the net reduction in operating mines was 3,689 and in capacity 234 million tons.

But such liquidation under the unregulated regime of competition provides no alleviation of the problem of overcapacity and overproduction, inasmuch as mines taken over under the receiver's hammer reopen on a new low-cost level and take away business and press down the price structure of the solvent mines, and thus there reappears in more drastic and destructive form the original competition on account of overcapacity.

These competitive pressures are concentrated on the flexible items of costs. Thus arose the vexed question of wage differentials, for which hitherto the industry has found no satisfactory solution. As wages constitute 60 to 65 percent of the cost of production, the fixing of the wage rate in any field at a competitive level becomes a matter of economic life and death. With a chronic surplus of labor the non-union mines of the South found they could obtain all necessary workers at much less than the 1924 wages of $7.50 a day under the ill fated Jacksonville agreement. Thus was created a situation by which in the last quarter of 1924 the operators in the Central Competitive Field paid $7.50 for an eight-hour day while operators in West Virginia paid the equivalent of $4.77 a day. Lower labor costs enabled them to capture much of the business of the Northern mines. While the South increased its production enormously, the unionized mines languished.

Accordingly one of the great tasks in framing a code of fair competition for the bituminous coal industry is to reach agreement on an equitable set of wage differentials that will give each field a reasonable share of the market.

Similarly, the schedules of rail rates have developed without the benefit of a continuous policy or a logical basis. Differentials in rates have been granted in order to compensate for the disadvantage of greater distances to the market, often without full appreciation of their ultimate effects. Once fixed after a new field has developed, the rate becomes a vested interest which can be changed only with the greatest difficulty.

In addition to the complexity of rate schedules, the rates on coal have advanced from time to time until the railroads have acquired the position of having a greater stake in the bituminous industry than the coal operators themselves. With such relationships it is obvious that the coal problem is not that of production alone, but one including transportation as well. If the rates are excessive, then the coal industry is penalized by the railroads in favor of competing fuels and energy. And it may well be that the railroads are penalizing themselves in terms of net revenue through the loss of this tonnage which the high rates have fostered.

While technological change is a continuous process in our industrial life, the last decade has witnessed a very rapid advance of mechanization. Mine power is now generally electrified. The mine mule has been largely displaced by the electric locomotive. The proportion undercut by the machine has jumped from 56 percent in 1918 to over 80 percent in 1932, and in many fields the cutting machine is now universally employed. Machines to replace the heavy labor of hand shoveling were placed on the market about 1922. From 1,880,000 tons loaded by machines in 1923, mechanized bituminous tonnage has increased to 47,500,000 tons in 1929. The twenty-five fold growth in eight years has represented a mechanical revolution in underground methods. Mechanical loading has been introduced chiefly in the union fields paying high wages, where the savings in labor cost are naturally greatest. Power shovels were brought in and stimulated strip mining, and the output produced by stripping has jumped from 1,300,000 tons in 1914 to over 20 million tons in 1932. The savings through mechanization are shown in the increased production per worker, which has risen from 3.8 tons in 1918 to 5.4 in 1932, an increase of 42 percent since the War. The number of men displaced by machines is not known accurately, but Mr. Newell G. Alford estimates that in the last ten years the number displaced by mechanical loading was 50,000. The displacement has fallen unequally, but most of it has occurred in the high-wage-rate fields of the Middle West and the Rocky Mountains.

Of the forces that have tended to curtail drastically the demand for coal since the War, progress in the art of converting fuel into mechanical power has been the most important single factor. The average percentage reduction in fuel consumed per

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unit of product from the beginning of the fuel-economy movement in 1909 to the end of the post-war boom in 1929 may be summarized as follows:

	Reduction
Electric public-utility power plants.....	66%
Steam railroads	40%
Petroleum refining	36%
Iron furnaces, steel works and rolling mills	25%
Cement mills	21%
All other manufacturing, approximately....	21%

The average reduction in all industrial and railroad uses combined is 33 percent. Stated another way, had there been no advance in thermal efficiency during the twenty years and had the efficiencies of 1909 continued without change, American business would have consumed 210 million tons more of bituminous coal in 1929 than were required.

The relative significance of the different fuels may be had by comparing their total heat values on a British-thermal-unit basis. By thus converting the quantities of the several fuels to a common basis, the trend and relative importance of each may be shown over a period of years. Bituminous coal supplied in 1913, 72.7 percent and in 1918, 72.3 percent, after which the proportion declined rapidly: 63.5 percent in 1923, 57 percent in 1929, 55.7 percent in 1930, 48.7 percent in 1931 and 44.9 percent in 1932. Corresponding percentages of the total energy supply contributed by competitive sources of fuel and energy have been as follows: Between 1899 and 1919 the percentage for petroleum varied from 5 percent to 10 percent; gas remained stationary at 3.5 percent; and hydro-electric varied from barely 2 percent to barely 4 percent. The course of these percentages since the peak production year of coal, 1923, has been as follows:

	Petroleum	Gas	Hydro-electric
1923	18.0	4.5	4.6
1929	22.8	7.7	7.3
1930	22.5	8.8	7.8
1931	24.8	8.8	8.4
1932	26.3	9.1	10.7

While these figures indicate a declining significance in the total energy supply of coal, it should be pointed out that all the growth of petroleum, gas and hydro-electricity cannot be held to have displaced coal. Of the total quantity of petroleum produced in 1919 only 36.9 percent of the total production was fuel oil. While it is difficult to measure the proportion of coal displaced in the 314 million barrels of oil used in 1929 outside oil companies, it is probably less than one-fourth, or the equivalent of 20 million tons, according to the National Industrial Conference Board.

The next important fuel competitor is natural gas. Here, too, it is necessary to distinguish between what is and what is not competitive. The output of natural gas in 1929 was approximately 2 trillion cubic feet, or the equivalent of 83 million tons of coal. Only about half of the total output of natural gas, however, enters directly into competition with coal.

The natural-gas industry underwent expansion in the depression. Since 1929 the competition of gas has been extremely acute in certain markets. There are instances in which gas has been offered to consumers at rates at which it would be necessary to sell coal at approximately the cost of transportation to the market or at best a price allowing only a few cents profit a ton at the mine to the producer. The offering of gas (and also oil) in some of the established coal markets at prices representing practically "dumping" figures, has wrought price slashes in coal out of all proportion to the quantity of the fuel so introduced.

The consequences of this excess productive capacity, magnified by the new technologies during the last decade, has been to create, in this always competitive industry, an economic warfare for markets. Price-cut has followed price-cut and large consumers have been able to set their own price. Operators have been compelled to run at a loss and income balance sheets, broadly speaking, have shown red figures since 1923.

The effect of disorganization has been particularly severe upon employment. In 1923 the industry employed 704,793 wage earners, while in 1931 the figure was 450,213. In 1932 the total employment was 379,565. The total reduction since the peak year 1923 has amounted to about 45 percent. But even that does not represent adequately the loss in employment. It is man-hours and man-days that tell the story. Not only has the number employed been drastically reduced, but the working time has also been curtailed. For a period of thirty-two years ending in 1921, bituminous mines worked on an average of 213 days per year. In no year during that period did the mines as a whole average as much as 250 days. Since 1921, the situation has become much worse, the nine-year period, 1922 to 1930, showing an average working time of 189 days. In 1931, the working time was 160 days, and in 1932, 145 days.

If one assumes that the production during the next six months will amount to as much as 200 million tons a rough estimate of employment to be expected can be made. Without prejudging the optimum weekly hours required for the industry with its very steep seasonal peaks, it is noteworthy that if thirty-two hours were set as the maximum working time and an average working time of thirty hours achieved, the average number of workers required would be approximately 385,000 men. If the average time achieved were thirty-five hours (approximately the same as for 1929), the average number employed would total only 330,000 workers. These numbers compare with 503,000 men employed in 1929.

The coal industry thus presents the spectacle of an industry overdeveloped and undermanaged, in a

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continuous state of internal and external economic struggle. The secret lies in the fact that under the regime of competitive individualism no one mine, no one company, could alleviate the evils alone. In fact, any forward step made by one mining company, good by itself, brings about conditions that are prejudicial to the industry as a whole, and makes the inherent contradictions only more acute. As Walter N. Polakov has pointed out, even if the demand for coal should double and the partly idle mines be enabled to cover the financial charges on their past excessive investments, the closed or bankrupt mines will be reopened, and the competitive war start over again. Then there will follow retrenchment, cutthroat competition, wage cuts, strikes, unemployment. The old squeaky wheel of deflation, disinvestment and disemployment will again revolve in full cycle; too many mines, too many miners, too much equipment, too little management, no planning, no living wages, no profit.

Despite the obvious need for the control of production, collective action to limit the output or control of markets has hitherto been blocked by the anti-trust laws, and indirect understandings of the kind which have been reached in some other industries were impossible among the thousands of mines driven on by the remorseless pressure of overhead expenses and fighting for a shrinking market.

The only solution for these conditions lies in organization and planning for the industry as a whole in the framework of an integral code, rather than in the legion of codes introduced. For the continuation of laissez-faire cutthroat competition will only render the situation practically hopeless and irremediable. The choice for the industry is between drift and chaos on the one hand and order and mastery on the other hand. Economic planning is untried, it has few precedents to follow and will require groping and struggling to develop a technique of equilibrium, of balancing production and consumption. Methods of adjustment between the various areas of production must be developed. Devices for restoring credit standing to the industry, of financing stocks of coal to smooth out the excessive seasonal fluctuations, and a resolute effort at coördinating and improving the wage levels and labor conditions of the industry must be made.

The National Recovery Act provides a way out, for it specifically aims to promote the rehabilitation of industry and conservation of natural resources, as well as the restoration of employment and mass purchasing power. Through organization of the factions within the industry under a unified code, and provision of an instrumentality for the gradual development of economic planning within the industry and in relation to competing or parallel fuel and energy industries, an opportunity is now afforded for the conservation of the natural resources of coal, for the conservation of the human resources, and for salvaging the capital resources. Thus can a halt be called to the continuous decline and waste, disemployment rather than employment, bankruptcy rather than even bare solvency, and thus only can coal enter upon a new era of recovery.

ALEXANDER SACHS.

Danseuse

You were a white event
And the gray fates made you;
A musical instrument
And the music played you;
You the poised living query,
He the dark prowling answer.
You swayed Dream's willowy unweary
Pirouetting dancer.
Caught on his arm you drooped
A swan death-stricken.
Fiercely he stooped,
Languidly you would quicken.
Flung his arm's length you twirled,
Floated, bowed,
Sank like a fountain furled
In a pool of cloud.
Tip-toe you twinkling ran,
The flight all feigning;
Wove with your arms a man
For your disdaining;
Swooned to a swift embrace,
Reclined on air, whirled wide,
Regained with perfect grace
Your preening pride. . . .

Beyond the net of light
On your lilied glory
The audience, half in night,
Sniffed allegory,
But my eyes from the stage were caught
By a throat, a shoulder,
A woman's profile wrought
To daze the beholder.
Erect she sat, so white
While the rhythms mazed her,
Her hands to her breast clutched tight,
You could see they crazed her.
Then her escort turned to speak;
I flinched him turning,
His eye, his brow, his cheek
Such tragic burning.
Thin-lipped she glanced one glance . . .
What he now ceased saying
I had lost in the last of your dance
And the music playing.
Pygmalion's miracle!
What fate had tied her
To the gentleman burning in Hell
Who sat beside her?

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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A Southern Romantic

SIDNEY CLOPTON LANIER was born in Macon, Georgia, on February 3, 1842, of a typical family of the Southern upper class. He died of tuberculosis at Lynn, in the mountains of North Carolina, on September 7, 1881. He had fought in the war between the states, as a Confederate private, and his career as a poet covered the sixteen years from his surrender with Lee at Appomattox to his death. His literary career was constantly interrupted by his career in music; until the last few years of his life he was first flutist in the Peabody Symphony Orchestra of Baltimore; he was recognized as one of the most distinguished performers of his day. In an age when the romantic movement had created a feeling for the unity of all the arts, and a belief in the interchangeability of their effects, Lanier was the first American to write music into poetry and to defend, with a theory, in "The Science of English Verse," that extraordinary practice. While the French were reproducing Chopin and Debussy in a verse that aimed at musical effects, rather than at the use of musical methods, Lanier made the literal attempt to transform poetry into a branch of music. It is to this fallacy that most of Lanier's critics have ascribed the defects of his verse. It explains his more obvious failures. But his chief limitation is probably due to the general weakness of the romantic sensibility. It is likely that had he never studied music his poetry would have been in principle the same.

From the time of his death until the Great War his reputation grew. For two reasons, I believe, it is declining. His poetry has little to say to this century either in substance or in technique. And it has never received any very precise critical evaluations. It became generally understood at the end of the last century—in the best anthological circles—that Lanier was the chief poet of the South, if Poe was not Southern; superior to his contemporary, Hayne, and to his earlier contemporary, Henry Timrod. It is time, if one found it interesting enough, to dispute at least the latter half of that judgment, and time, also, to remember a name that the generation after Lanier forgot: Thomas Holley Chivers. It is the desire to give Lanier a "rank" and to worry his poetry into some kind of "social significance," rather than the critical impulse to estimate the exact quality of his work, that has kept him from being justly placed in American letters.

We have before us the second complete life of the poet, a large volume by Mr. Aubrey Harrison Starke.[1] Mr. Starke has found a small amount of new material, but it is of minor importance. Professor Edwin Mims' "Sidney Lanier," published in the American Men of Letters Series in 1905, will probably remain the standard work. At all crucial points Mr. Starke follows Professor Mims. Mr. Starke's belief that Professor Mims had not done justice to the "national" as opposed to the "sectional" aspects of Lanier's "thought," is the reason for the new biography. He makes tedious a false issue that Professor Mims discussed at sufficient length. Now that the euphemisms of *fin de siècle* nationalism have served their purpose, and the trusts and mergers have had their way, the innocent social beliefs of Professor Mims' "nationalism" are no longer necessary. So Mr. Starke takes higher ground: Lanier was a figure on the model of Christ—and indeed, as we shall see, the poet himself left some authority for this view:

> . . . we need to know him, and so long as he becomes known to us for what he was, so long as he becomes known not merely to some but to all who love the American spirit and our great men, it matters little whether we find him in his poetry or in his letters, or in the tradition that lingers, or in the beautiful face of Keyser's bronze bust. It is only essential that we come to know him. . . .

Mr. Starke has his lapses from evangelism, and offers us specimens of a critical style:

> It [Lanier's "Clover"] is written in blank verse—the first, presumably, that Lanier had written since 1869, blank verse of a quality that suggests that of the Masters, Shakespeare and Milton, but suffused with a warm morning atmosphere that suggests the poetry of him to whom "Clover" is inscribed, John Keats. If we wish other resemblances we shall find them in Emerson and Tennyson. . . .

Professor Mims is a less suggestible critic:

> He was inoculated with the conceit virus of the seventeenth century. . . . He did not restrain his luxuriant imagination. The poem "Clover" is almost spoiled by the conceit of the ox representing the "Course-of-things" and trampling upon the souls (the clover-blossoms) of the poets.

Part of the passage in question is:

> Lo, what bulk is here?
> Now comes the Course-of-things, shaped like an ox,
> Slow-browsing o'er my hillside, ponderously—
> The huge-brawned, tame, and workful Course-of-things. . . .
> Comes browsing o'er my hills and vales of time,
> And thrusts me out his tongue, and curls it, sharp,
> And sicklewise, about my poets' heads,
> And twists them in. . . .

[1] Sidney Lanier, by Aubrey H. Starke. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 541 pages. $5.

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It is a model of what poetry should not be; it is one of the worst pieces of writing in nineteenth-century American verse. But is its defect that of the seventeenth-century conceit?

Lanier believed that he employed the seventeenth-century conceit, and his critics have believed it after him. It is the one effort of comparative analysis that they have made. But Lanier was mistaken, and Professor Mims, I believe, was misled. The mistake assumes that any unsuccessful figure of speech is conceit, and therefore bad. The allegory of the ox is execrable, but it is not conceit. It is a symbol. In that distinction lies one fundamental difference between the greatest epoch of English lyrical verse, when the conceit was rooted in the poetic attitude, and the nineteenth century, which after Landor witnessed a poetic decline. It was not the elaboration of images, but the blurring of images in a random kind of verbiage, that made possible inferior writing like "Clover." Lacking any certain philosophical moorings, the Victorian poet was at liberty to construct his own world; he thought that a new and confused juxtaposition of images, based upon a feeling into the images of a quality not perceived, constituted a new order of truth. (Lanier himself had a vague theory of the "nature-metaphor" to justify this breakdown of the sensibility, which appears in his phrases, "affable live-oaks," "tolerant plains," etc.) This illicit process of inspiration is at the center of Tennyson's "In Memoriam"; the personality of Hallam as mere personality, is made to carry an enormous burden of emotion and idea that is not inherent in it. The central idea, which is presented as a central image, remains incomprehensible; we cannot accept it as a symbol because it is private and arbitrary, not objective and conventional; and it is for that reason a bad symbol.

What happened to the nineteenth-century mentality to make this fault of vision is not a question to be answered here. It is a fault inherited by our own time. From Lanier's "Psalm of the West," which we shall look at presently, to the late Hart Crane's "The Bridge," the heritage is unbroken: apart from the vast superiority of Crane's genius, the defective sensibility of the two poems is the same. There is the necessity felt by both poets to approach the subject—in this case the same subject, the American spirit—as fact and symbol, as private experience and public knowledge; and the two elements of the poems are not brought together.

In "Clover" we have, according to Professor Mims, the "conceit of the ox representing the [illegible]-of-things and trampling upon the souls (the [illegible]lossoms) of the poets." There is as much [illegible]erstanding packed into that sentence as could found in so brief a critical statement. The with the ox is not that he is a conceit, but is not. The conceit does not *represent* any- t may be laid down as a principle of early [illegible]enth-century verse, that the conceit is no han a simile or a metaphor. Where the symbol attempts to exhaust all the implications of the idea that it stands for, the conceit is only illustrative. The differences or identities of parallel images are exhibited, by intention of the poet, for the first time. The distinctive mark of the conceit, setting it apart from simple metaphor and simile, is its greater extent; the conceit is a single figure of speech carried through a long passage or an entire poem. (Dante, who understood the nature of a symbol, kept his famous figure of the frogs at the level of the conceit.) Abraham Cowley's "The Prophet," a poem in the cavalier convention, sustains to the end a metaphor in which the figure of of the Discoverer illustrates the figure of the Lover:

> 'Tis I who love's Columbus am; 'tis I,
> Who must new worlds in it descry:
> Rich worlds, that yield of treasure more
> Than all that has been known before.

The Discoverer is the casual image of the Lover; he in no sense represents the Lover or stands as the known symbol of the Lover. Both images may be put into other combinations to form other conceits. But it is characteristic of a symbol, like the Cross, that it represents with a high degree of constancy the same emotions and ideas. The ox is a bad symbol for Lanier's purpose because it represents nothing but a confused abstraction that never reaches a visible connection with the clover-like souls. All effort to perceive the relation in exact images ends in ludicrous failure. The symbol is a humorless and pretentious failure of sentimentality.

It has been necessary to labor the point in order to understand its implications. The habit of Lanier's critics is to approach his poetry after his biography, to see his verse as the "interpretation" of social and moral ideas implicit in the general course of his career: he is a poet with a social point of view. It is my purpose here, however, to look at the poetry first, the final test of the poet's clarity and depth, of the value of what he said to his age.

There are about ninety-five poems collected by Mrs. Lanier in the definitive volume, "The Poems of Sidney Lanier" (Scribner's, 1913). Of these there are perhaps five pieces that entitle Lanier to a place among the minor writers of the Gilded Age. "From the Flats," in which he achieves his greatest precision of statement; "A Ballad of Trees and the Master," his most successful experiment in rhythm; and "Tampa Robins"—these three poems are largely free from the extravagant vices of the poet's vocabulary. They add nothing to the long tradition of English verse; they are the super-magazine poetry of a commonplace and confused mind, which for the moment escapes from the romantic ego and fixes itself upon *objects perceived*. The final stanza of "From the Flats" is the high point in Lanier:

> Oh might I through these tears
> But glimpse some hill my Georgia high uprears,

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> Where white with quartz and pink the pebble shine,
> The hickory heavenward strives, the muscadine
> Swings o'er the slope, the oak's far-falling shade
> Darkens the dogwood in the bottom glade,
> And down the hollow from a ferny nook
> Bright leaps the living brook!

The third line is inexcusable, and the defects of the whole stanza are of an elementary order.

Lanier's most famous poems are "Sunrise" and "The Marshes of Glyn"; three others are usually cited by his critics to support his fame: "The Symphony," "Corn" and "Psalm of the West." Of these last it may be said that it is impossible to discuss them as poetry; the problems that they raise belong properly in some other field of discourse. Of the two most ambitious poems, "The Marshes of Glyn" is the better. It has two distinct features: a mechanical versification superimposed for its own "musical" value upon the subject; a muddled handling of the images, a fault concealed by the use of semi-symbolic abstractions and moralistic ideas. It is probably correct to assume that Lanier's whole theory of verse, greatly spun out with incidental truths in "The Science of English Verse," is a rationalization of his incapacity to set forth a clear image: the theory holds that "all ideas may be abolished out of a poem without disturbing its effect on the ear as verse." The results of the theory in Lanier's work are the two defects of "The Marshes of Glyn."

But these defects are general in late nineteenth-century poetry, and Lanier's "scientific" defense of them is only one of the many forms that they assumed. The theory of an absolute metrics is possible only in an age that takes an irresponsible view of the subject-matter of poetry; and this, in spite of the high moral tone habitual with Lanier, is precisely what he did. His way of "abolishing out of a poem" all its ideas is to write from an incoherent center, and to put the ideas in at random. The moral relations implied by his general terms are not mastered; this inexactness of his statement invalidates his moral point of view.

It is the great weakness of the humanitarian-romantic movement in literature. Take the famous lines from "The Marshes of Glyn":

> Inward and outward to northward and southward the beach-lines linger and curl
> As a silver-wrought garment clings to and follows the firm sweet limbs of a girl.

The intention is a simple simile, but to write it concisely and accurately was too difficult for Lanier. There is not, in all his work, sufficient insight into his own romantic sensibility to permit him to carry it to its logical conclusion. While his French contemporaries were consciously protesting against the consequences of romanticism in literature, and of its social counterpart, industrial capitalism; while they were consciously mixing their metaphors so as to create a precise image of spiritual damnation—Lanier remained the dupe of his own assumptions, and to the end of his life misunderstood the implication of his position.

In evasion of the most arduous labor of the poet, he sprinkled his poems with meaningless didacticisms:

> Tolerant plains, that suffer the sea and the rains and the sun,
> Ye spread and span like the Catholic man who has mightily won
> God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain
> And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain.

In a controversy growing out of Lanier's appointment to write the ode for the centennial cantata at Philadelphia in 1876, a critic in The Nation wrote: "Mr. Lanier's poetic sensibility and serious purpose cannot make up for a lack of clear expression in his writing. This lack is the evidence not so much of want of practice in composition as of discipline of thought." Lanier's comment on this criticism, a judgment which applies to his whole career as well as to the question under controversy in The Nation, was written in a letter to his brother; it is of great interest:

> . . . it has naturally caused me to make a merciless arraignment and trial of my artistic purposes; and an unspeakable content arises out of the revelation that they come from an ordeal confirmed in innocence and clearly defined in their relations to all things. I do not hate people who have so cruelly maltreated me; they knew not what they did. . . .

The passage deserves study; it contains the whole explanation of Sidney Lanier. Its intellectual insincerity is, I believe, inextricably bound up wi a kind of moral insincerity inseparable from the mentality of Victorian romanticism in America. The self-reverence echoing the words of Christ; the evasion of intellectual responsibility by means of the pseudo-mystical belief in the innocence of his ego; the perverse determination to protect the ego from reality—all this is familiar in the naturalistic tradition. We have seen the effects of that attitude in his poetry—the incapacity to write precisely, and the rationalization of the defect with confused allegory. It is a fundamental quality of his entire moral and intellectual outlook.

Lanier's chronic ill-health, his romantic e as a Confederate scout, his poverty after t his struggles to find a literary career in the of the Reconstruction, blinded the next gen to all but a few technical imperfections in hi The meaning of these technical flaws remain day unexplored. Given the formula upon his poetry was written—a formula that w examined—we may deduce his general inte

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procedure. As he failed to present one clear image in his verse, so he failed to see through a single leading idea of his age. And this failure, as in the case of his poetry, betrayed him into large abstractions with moral names; he identified with "truth" those political notions, those public movements, those theories of art, which promised success to his career. For the self-reverent romantic, having only an ego, has only, for the world, the extension of that ego which is a career.

Lanier's prose no less than his verse is a mass of disorderly ideas. The spirit of his critical writings is optimism and easy analogy. For one thing, he shared with his age the delusion that the function of applied science is to make men at home in nature. The political direction of that scientific age was taking man out of nature in the religious sense, and enslaving him to a naturalistic order. This "materialism" Lanier denounced throughout his career, but because his alternative to it was only a "faith" that it would eventually prove beneficial to society, he based his career upon its more respectable vulgarities. Having convinced himself, in an essay called "The New South," that the South would become, after the break-up of the plantations, a region of securely rooted small farmers, he was at liberty to misunderstand the social and economic significance of the Civil War, and to flatter the industrial capitalism of the North in a long poem, "Psalm of the West," a typical expression of Reconstruction imperialism. "There is nothing sectional," writes Mr. Starke, "in this chant of the glory of freedom." On the contrary it is all sectional—with Northern sectionalism, which became the "nationalism" of the Southern liberals in the generation of Harris, Grady and Lanier. In Lanier's poem it is a nationalism of complimentary allusion to Massachusetts and of large personifications that could mean almost anything to a poet who had not grappled with the inner spirit of his age; a poet to whom the first reality is the inviolability of his own personality.

The trouble with the age, thought Lanier, was that Trade had crushed Chivalry. Having said that, in several allegories, he proceeded, in terms that made the issue seem different, to flatter Trade. He believed that the searing blast of art should be tempered to the shorn and public lamb; that he must defer to the public taste, consciously, in order the better at some later time to instruct it. No one who has studied his career will deny that he did both; though one must admit that his instruction could have been better than it was. On the whole one must confess that Sidney Lanier was a prophet foretelling only the blessings of our own age. His refusal to look for a fundamental alternative to the beliefs of the Reconstruction era, and his acceleration of those beliefs under the illusion that he was correcting them, are in the intellectual tradition of our time. He was a nineteenth-century leader who helped to make us what we are today.

ALLEN TATE.

Washington Notes

Swope and the Miners—Fighting the Open Shop—Injunctions against the N.R.A.—Will the Supreme Court Play Ball?

MR. GERARD SWOPE must regard his features each morning in his shaving mirror with some curiosity. Mr. Swope, one of the country's leading open-shop employers, has now become, in effect, a volunteer worker for the A. F. of L. in the soft-coal industry. He must wonder how it happened. His case is interesting as the first of our industrial princes to be taken captive by the N.R.A.

Mr. Swope's selection as chairman of the Coal Mediation Board was originally regarded with despair by labor. Mr. Swope has many and important Wall Street connections. Through Mr. B. M. Baruch, he is a friend of long standing of Mr. Roosevelt and General Johnson. It looked obviously as if Mr. Swope had been chosen to act as unofficial go-between among the coal owners and the administration. It looked also as if labor was going to be frozen out.

Another circumstance made A. F. of L. leaders extremely suspicious. At the same time that Mr. Swope was appointed to the Coal Mediation Board, a settlement of the Fayette County strike was reached in Washington. The settlement provided that weighing scales were to be installed in all mines, that the workers were to elect their own checkweighmen and that no strikers were to be penalized. However, with the approval of General Johnson, the H. C. Frick Coal Company, subsidiary of the United States Steel Corporation, was permitted to sign a separate document omitting all reference to unionization. This was taken as proof that the administration was about to capitulate to the open-shop coal owners.

Almost as soon as Mr. Swope had moved into an office in the Department of Commerce building, however, a telegram arrived from the Fayette County strikers announcing that the Frick company had refused to install scales. Slowly and majestically, the machinery of the N.R.A. then began to grind. The telegram had been addressed to Mr. Edward F. McGrady, Labor Assistant to General Johnson, who hastily routed it on to Mr. Swope. There was Mr. Swope, alone in his shiny office with the telegram. As chairman of the new Coal Mediation Board, he could hardly ignore the first complaint duly and formally placed before him. Mr. Swope picked up his telephone and long-distanced the Frick company's president, Mr. Thomas Moses.

The next day, a second telegram arrived, saying that the Frick company declined to recognize the workers' checkweighman. Again Mr. Swope telephoned Mr. Moses. The third day, a little procession of miners came straggling through the corridors of the Commerce building inquiring for Mr. Swope in person. They wished to report that the Frick company would not take back any of the strike leaders.

It was discovered that Mr. Swope had fled for a long week-end at his summer place at Ossining, N.Y. Surrounded by the strikers' delegation, Mr. McGrady accord-

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ingly telephoned to Ossining. It was unnecessary for him to explain that a group of irate miners loose in N.R.A. headquarters might make extremely bad publicity. Mr. Swope said he would do his best, and spent the next twenty-four hours at the telephone trying to run down Mr. Moses, who also was week-ending. At last, wearily but triumphantly, he was able to report to Mr. McGrady that the strikers could go home, that the Frick company would give them all back their jobs. The strikers were elated; they returned to Pennsylvania with stiffened spines and ready to fight for unionism to the bitter end.

The whole logic of the N.R.A. tends inescapably towards government unionization of industry. Anyone caught in the N.R.A. machinery, after a little while, is seemingly unable to avoid talking and acting like a union walking-delegate. No one could have less enthusiasm for unionism than General Johnson, yet he has already performed great services towards unionizing the textile industry. The coal and steel employers are begining to believe that the N.R.A. must either be smashed or utterly transformed, or else the open shop will be doomed.

The one thing which haunts the secret thoughts of this administration, in my opinion, is the horrid suspicion that all it is doing is unconstitutional, and null and void. All you need do to scare the wits out of any administration leader is to creep up behind him and whisper, "Injunction." Last week an injunction sought against the N.R.A. by a Texas oil company was denied in the District of Columbia Supreme Court by Justice Cox, who took the ground that it was none of the court's business to interfere with the high purposes of the President in this great emergency. Administration leaders nearly collapsed with surprise, relief and delight. Another injunction, brought by Chicago milk interests, is now pending against the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. The A.A.A. has won a breathing-space by the neat device of having the deputy administrator against whom the injunction was specifically asked resign his post. In this country no suit can be brought against the government as such; it must be brought against some particular official, and if that official resigns, you are obliged to go back to the beginning and start over again, like parchesi.

The administration's chief hope of eluding an eventual Supreme Court veto, so I am informed, rests on the permissive character of much of the N.R.A. and A.A.A. programs. The N.R.A. blanket code was deliberately cast in the form of a simple contract between Mr. Roosevelt and the individual employer, John Smith. Mr. Smith voluntarily contracts to do certain things—pay his employees a specified minimum wage and work them only a specified number of hours—and in return Mr. Roosevelt agrees to give him a Blue Eagle. If Mr. Smith falls down on his contract, Mr. Roosevelt takes the Blue Eagle away. Every legal authority in the administration had a finger in the blanket code; they all feel confident that, on this one measure at least, they have the Supreme Court blocked.

Nominally the codes now being drafted for separate industries are also permissive. However, in case of violation, they are supposed to be enforced by licensing powers vested in the President. Whether these licensing powers of the President are constitutional is a much debated question. A business man might be able to show, for example, that observance of his industry's code would put him in bankruptcy. Has the President the right, under the Constitution, to take action which would force such a man to go bankrupt? It is obviously a crucial point; on it depends the workability of the whole N.R.A. program.

Both General Johnson and Mr. Richberg, counsel to the N.R.A., constantly betray their anxiety over the constitutionality of their procedure. The officials of the A.A.A. appear a much more light-hearted crew. Some of them, at least, privately hold the opinion that the present Supreme Court is too timid to declare either the N.R.A. or the A.A.A. unconstitutional. They point out that the Dred Scott case is the only instance in which the Supreme Court dared annul a widely popular piece of legislation, and that was in 1857. Ever since then the Supreme Court, each time a hot issue has been brought before it, has tried frantically to duck. However, should the Supreme Court attempt to nullify the N.R.A. and the A.A.A., they believe Congress could be worked up to such a pitch that it would joyously authorize the creation of six new Supreme Court Justices, or whatever number was required to reverse the Court's decision.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Steel Production Slumps—Hope in the Public Works Program—Banks, Pools and Suckers —How the Money Rolls In

WHEN the steel masters walk out of an N.R.A. labor conference, because William Green is present, that is dramatic, gets on page one and excites emotions as well as attention. The fact that steel operations have dropped off from 59 percent of capacity to 53 percent in a few weeks is not dramatic at all, does not come under the head of public entertainment and hence gets chronicled somewhere back around page 35. But it is a most important fact—ominous, full of portents for those millions of deeply troubled, puzzled men and women who have come to believe that there is some kind of magic at work in Washington which is quite certain to produce results.

The rise in steel operations during the last two months has been one of the most important elements in the stimulation of confidence among business men. This would be a sounder basis for hope if the operations of the steel mills had been caused by the production of capital goods—structural steel, metal for heavy machinery, etc. But it has not. It has been the result of heavier buying of alloyed steel by the automobile industry to use in current models, by large government orders for such public works as the San Francisco Bay bridges and by the tin-plate and pipe industry's purchases for immediate and future wants.

Now buying by automobile companies for their current models is practically exhausted. Forward buying of pipe and tin plate has tapered off. All the reports agree that the building industry is giving little support, railroads hardly any—"an occasional release against some old railroad order," as The Iron Age puts it—and that there is only slight support from agricultural-implement makers.

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The fact is that the steel industry has now one hope—more government spending. "The biggest thing on the horizon now is the government naval program," says a trade review. A Chicago report says that the only thing in structural steel around that section is "a few scattered post offices." Down in Cleveland they are looking longingly toward a big government order that will use about 24,000 tons.

These points are put forward to illustrate how critical is the dependence of the steel industry now on the actual starting of a government-works program. Steel operations have decreased now for three weeks. By the time this is printed they will doubtless register another decrease. A decrease in the steel industry will have a most unhappy effect upon general business confidence. And we are moving with terrible swiftness toward Labor Day and the long hoped-for fall upturn. The one big job in Washington now is pressure on the public-works program. Better still, the calling of Congress at an earlier date than December to expand that program.

The Stock Exchange has called upon brokers to report weekly all pool operations with which they are connected or which they know of through office orders. But this will do no good, unless the Stock Exchange does something about it. And there is very little likelihood that they will unless driven to it. Meantime it would be interesting to know what the banks have done about it. I have already called attention in this column to the outrageously manipulated character of the last market boom which collapsed July 19 and 20. There were, it seems to me, about twenty-five or thirty pools, joint accounts and large individual operations under way in that market. These pools cannot operate without bank credit. And the larger ones always arrange for it before they begin an operation. The banks which lend this money are not children. They know what it is being used for and where it is going. They know where these syndicate operations are being directed. Yet they lend hundreds of millions of dollars for this purpose. Is there not in the banking fraternity, somewhere, a sense of social responsibility which can create a rule against using the funds of depositors for this sort of thing? The provisions of the Glass-Steagall bill which give the Federal Reserve Board a kind of airy supervision over member bank market loans, are practically inoperative now and probably will continue to be. Apparently there is no power left to reach these pools save government supervision of the Exchange and the taxing power of the federal government.

How many people speculate? I have been trying to find out. The president of the Exchange says all the trouble in Wall Street, the boosting of stock prices, etc., is the fault of the public. The "whole population," he tells us, rushed into Wall Street in 1929. I have been raking through income-tax returns to get some clew to this question. As nearly as I can make out the very largest figure that can be settled on as representing the outside estimate of security speculators is 900,000. That still leaves 122,100,000 who did not go near the market. It is probable that the number was very much less than 900,000.

But in looking this matter up I ran upon some interesting facts. I found that back in 1929, when some 470,000 persons reported profits on speculation in stocks, bonds, real estate and all sorts of assets, about 100,000 of them made almost all the profits.

Here is another eye-opener. People who have enormous incomes get the great bulk of them from speculative profits and the bigger the income the bigger the percentage of speculative profits. Poor folks commonly suppose that great millionaires get their incomes from clipping coupons, collecting interest and dividends from their investments. They get plenty that way, but the bulk of it is from speculative gains. For instance, those who had incomes of over a million dollars got only 2 percent of it from earned salaries and a little over 26 percent of it from interest on bonds and dividends on stock. But they collected nearly 60 percent of it from speculative gains.

Those with incomes of $50,000 to $100,000 earned 16 percent and got 32 percent from interest and dividends and 28 percent from speculation. Of course, down in the lower brackets the income-tax payers have to work for and earn almost all they get.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

Grandis, Elegans, Venusta

Aristophanes, by Gilbert Murray. New York: Oxford Press. 268 pages. $2.50.

LONG ago I remember coming on some Homeric comments of Mr. Gladstone's in which he deduced profound domestic fidelities from the "Odyssey." It seems hardly worth while either to look up the passage exactly or to recall my youthful surprise; for at that time I knew more, however little, of Homer than of the great Victorians and doubtless felt, considering the time it took Ulysses to reach home again and his island love-affairs on the way, plus the wonder of all antiquity that Penelope should have resisted so long the charms of her suitors, that Mr. Gladstone was forcing the sermon rather, and that the Grecian hero would not have been the model husband for Mrs. Gladstone or the Queen. I mention the case only as a comment on Professor Murray's borrowing a good deal from Aristophanes to serve his own state of mind. While seeing Aristophanes "devoted to three great subjects, Peace, Poetry and the philosophic criticism of life," he manages a sizable amount of theory about the World War, peace, leadership and so on.

This general process is admirable, since nothing is more obvious than the need to apply literature to life and to bring to bear on life the content of literature. The result here is a wise, sane curve in the statement of the sum of Aristophanes' career. "We see the cultivated youth undertaking a fulfilment, in terms of great art, of the rude phallic dance and song which was the Kômos of Dionysus; the raising of the old abuse and crude invective to expressions of political, social, philosophic and literary indignation tinged with idealism; the turn toward perfecting his technical instrument, when public affairs in Athens failed him; the breaking of this instrument in his hands, partly because of a lack of public funds for theatrical productions, partly because of the increasing fear in politics, partly because of the rise in the level of that refinement that he

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himself had helped promote. And finally we see the development of a new type of play, of individuals, emotions, character, intrigue, that was to become through Menander, sixty years after, the source of so much later theatre. This is all to the good. The defect of Professor Murray's book is that it has something about the whole of it like the soft edge of lecturing, as if aware of the tremors, approvals and delights of quite nice people to be wooed to the subject.

There is at times an effect of apology almost that gives the sense of how very well the writer has handled his rough Greek substance. This is exactly the contrary sense to what should be given. Aristophanes no doubt needs to have placed or corrected the distorted conceptions in many readers' minds; but the most important thing is to let them know that dealing with a great artist like this is their responsibility, not Aristophanes' privilege. They must get it in their heads that they are the side issue, standing under Aristophanes as under the firmament, and will have to do the best they can about it. The abundance, the discovery of the final image, the riot, poetry, phallicism, bawdiness, vast culture and theatrical power of this Greek writer present a problem in statement or conveyance that might well intimidate anyone, not to speak of the disadvantage in forcing a sort of artistic cosmos of one race to fit another race. It is here that Professor Murray fails with Aristophanes. His attack on his spacious subject, more alien to himself and to us all than he admits, has no little balance and discernment; his approach to us, his readers, is middle-class and mild, a classic scene in milky water colors, morals in a full immensity seen with patience, kindly grace and wisdom and tea-table courage. I have seen no book in a long time that distressed me as this book does on one particular ground, which is that the sight so far exceeds the willingness to shoot. In this running brook the book exists but gently; this sermon needs stones in it. Life is of course a mystery. I am but left wondering, nevertheless, that the word "astringent" applied to Aristophanes in the Plutarch fragment, should leave so little mark on this interpretation; or that more of a full and happy courage and abandon with Aristophanes might not have been invited by the mere quotation of Quintilian's famous comment:

> The Old Comedy is almost alone in preserving the true charm *(sinceram gratiam)* of Attic speech; at the same time it has the most expressive freedom of speech *(fecundissimae libertatis)*, especially in denouncing vice, though it is full of strength all through. It is grand, elegant and charming *(grandis, elegans, venusta)*, and—Homer always excepted, like Achilles—I doubt if any other literature is more akin to oratory or more suitable for making orators.

Nothing could bring us up more sharply to our final hurdle. Aristophanes is of all classic writers the most completely untranslatable. Not only the variety and the innate Attic quality of his language is behind this impasse (despite the fact that our Elizabethan tradition is, as everybody knows, an unusually good lead with regard to him). The ultimate impossibility consists in the fact that so much of Aristophanes is based on the parody—often rising to great and authentic heights—of Greek authors, styles and ideas. Translating from him into English ends by being only arch, or awry with archaism and too patent idiom, or heavy with professorial high-spirits, bluff and hale.

Professor Murray's inclusion of a chapter on Menander seems to me an admirable plan. The Old Comedy is further revealed in juxtaposition thus with the Middle and the New. We see more readily the extent to which Aristophanes raised the old form by filling it, and Menander held the filling together by drawing on the old form. The qualities of this later comic writer are more in Professor Murray's line. His discussion of Menander, however, could, in my opinion, improve vastly by two points. First, when he indicates the Menander influence or technical basis, on down through Plautus and Terence, Molière, Jonson, Congreve, et cetera, to modern comedy technique, he should add such modern realistic theatre, as Ibsen, for example, or Pinero, Benavente, Pirandello and on down to Sidney Howard. Second, when he discusses the hundred plays of Menander as they are found constantly manipulating the same types of situations, tricks, motivations, characters and plots, Professor Murray should dwell more on the expression of ideas and motives through the *combinazione* that Latin peoples understand, that expression through the sheer order, the arrangement, the combination of familiar elements. In "Tartuffe" the exact place in the play at which Organ's mother defends the hypocrite says everything; in "La Locandiera" the easy and luminous profundity arises from the mutual arrangement and harmony among the most simple, prose, even trite, elements. The final achievement and essence in both these very Latin plays will lie in the tone in which the whole play exists. This in them is what is most apt to escape members of certain other races; as is proved by the fact that most Anglo-Saxons think of Molière as a writer of farces, and that the Moscow Art Theatre, after infinite study, technique and searching, created at length a production that had almost everything possible to the Goldoni play but its landscape or content. I am sure that this is the ground on which our approach to Menander must begin.

Professor Murray's book would gain by stressing the gift in which, however they may excel him in this respect or that, Aristophanes surpasses all other writers of comedy. This is the gift for dramatic images, which means not talk about his theme or motif or idea, but the creation, the discovery, of some plot, device, situation, stage moment, character, that will exist organically, that does the dramatic work for him. One example—in "The Clouds"—will serve. When old Strepsiades goes to study at Socrates' school, what he wants is to become such a good analyzer and speaker that he can talk around paying his debts. He is too stupid to learn well and his son is sent, who learns not only the needed arts but other new-fangled ideas (among which is the justice of beating his parents), and against all his father's pleas remains true to his new heroes, who believe neither in gods nor laws. This is a perfect image, or figure, for what ends various subtleties and subjectivities of thought and theory can serve us, and what they can do to the standards we have lived by. Or, briefly, (the "Knights") there is the figure: in Athens Cleon emptying the Agora of power by feeding and easing the people; in the play news of a school of anchovies in the harbor emptying the Agora of voters by cheap fish.

The repeated reminder that the hatred of Aristophanes toward Socrates and Euripides has been much exaggerated and distorted is admirable. All I should ask of the writer

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here is that he should not put it so mildly, as if softening the poet's rages. He should rather emphasize further his point that these men and what they represented in the changing Athens were much in Aristophanes' mind; that with the turning toward individualism, the inner soul and so on, Aristophanes himself was torn, knowing well the virtues of the old state ideal and the inevitability of the new subjective and subtler spirit that would help undermine it. In the light of this point the famous characterizations of Euripides and Socrates, never base or personally slanderous, take on an added brilliance, discrimination and concern. In such cases from the Old Comedy the more or less permanent quality of Mediterranean wit and humor is for us misleading, not to speak of the immense vitality and contagious exuberance of that comic invention, which even for Aristotle was already gone wrong. If Aristophanes had hated Socrates as some commentators have thought, Plato would never have had him an honored guest in the "Symposium." It was this new spirit in men, of which Aristophanes was so unescapably a part and which so drove him on to the attack, that twenty-four years later in a changed Athens, dropped to a lower level where danger was, and Socrates was publicly condemned to death. He himself, speaking out of a strange, marvelous, as it were impersonal solitude, said then that the Socrates they were accusing was not he but a figure built up in their minds in childhood or youth by those who had misunderstood him. "You yourselves have seen this in Aristophanes' comedy: a Socrates who is carried about and says that he walks the air and talks a lot more nonsense that I know nothing about." "And to fight now," he said, "against this false prejudice is like fighting a shadow; it will never come to grips."

STARK YOUNG.

Folk Music at White Top

MANY of the folk songs and dances of the Southern uplands are now being rescued from oblivion. Like archaeologists exhuming lost arts and cultures, those interested in folk music are endeavoring to revive and preserve the "white spirituals," ballads and jig tunes that hark back to Colonial America and even Elizabethan England. In another generation the old-time folk singers and musicians of the Appalachian highlands will have passed with the primitive life that produced their songs.

It was to see and hear the mountain banjo-pickers, fiddlers, ballad singers and dancers, and to restore appreciation of American folk music, that composers, collectors of ballads and representatives of folk societies attended the Folk Festival held August 11 and 12 at White Top, Virginia. White Top Mountain, more than a mile above sea-level and near the borders of Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee, once blazed with Indian signal fires; later it became the refuge of horse-thieves and Civil War slackers. Here, in the heart of the Southern Appalachians, is a remnant population of Anglo-Saxons untouched by a changing and jittery world. The hill-billy as a rule is a stubborn individualist. Along the valleys and foothills of the White Top region he cultivates his rugged acres, or fishes and hunts. But the band-saw mills have invaded his virgin forests. Industry and commerce threaten his traditional culture. In many instances R.F.C. labor has built a road past his house for automobiles. And now strangers drive up to White Top to record his songs, which, like his customs, seem to grow in value as they recede into the past.

Fantastic hill-billies with fiddles under their arms gathered from many states. Here on the mountain, in an immense pavilion constructed of freshly sawed timbers, they played their tunes before amplifiers. Cameras clicked, typewriters rattled at the press table, and traffic officers outside injected an unmistakable note of a newer age, as more than 15,000 visitors milled about the bare mountaintop. Modernity has all but engulfed these musicians of the hills, whose customs are still rooted in antiquity and whose early environment is instinctive in their ballads. When they go, their songs and tunes will lose their original meaning and pungency. The new generation already sings more of the "Tin Henry" and less of the "Flop-Eared Mule."

A work-worn woman dressed in a loose Mother Hubbard trudges to the front of the platform to sing. She has large wrinkled hands and, on her face, a look of great sweetness. Judges sit at one side; newspaper men and women peck away on the other; the contestants stand or sit at the back waiting their turn. The woman turns a soft, timid look to Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, sitting near the judges, who gives her an appreciative smile. With easy control she sing-songs a ballad in plaintive yodeling tones. A lanky backwoodsman, called upon for a song, comes forward and, bowing modestly to Mrs. Roosevelt, sings with a simple pride in his art. Fiddlers, banjo pickers, guitar strummers, fife and dulcimer players and clog-dancers, some in patched overalls, others in cheap store clothes, apparently do not feel embarrassed by the presence of the First Lady. They aren't self-conscious, they aren't trying to show off, yet it is evident that they want her to appreciate what they are doing.

They play and sing "Along the Mountain," "Pretty Polly," "The Kitchen Hag," "Cluck, Old Hen," "The Flop-Eared Mule" and "Salty Dog." Folk hymns are sung by family choirs. Country couples twirl, promenade and stomp in a square dance, energized by furious fiddles and banjos. The singing, the string music and the metrical beat of feet on boards, amplified by loudspeakers, animates not only the crowd in the large pavilion, but the thousands sitting in cars or picnicking all over the grassy acres of the mountain top. For days afterwards the strangeness of the melodies would linger with the visitors.

This is the third annual festival sponsored by Mrs. J. P. Buchanan, of Marion, Virginia, and John M. Blakemore, of Abingdon, with the able assistance of John Powell, pianist and composer, of Richmond. Interest in this year's festival was more widespread than formerly among the backwoods musicians themselves. On the program was Jilson Setters, the singing fiddler of Lost Hope Hollow, Kentucky, who was sent to England by the American Folk Song Society to play before royalty. From Nashville came the Old Harp Singers. A lengthy narrative song, originating in the woods of northern Michigan, was sung with gusto by an aged Michigan woman. Two or three of the participants were from a place named Wolf Pen, West Virginia.

Most of the musicians at White Top are unspoiled by exhibitionism. Rather, they seem to feel that they are

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rendering a service as much to be expected as the old-fashioned hospitality they freely extend. It is plain to observers that the mountain singer feels himself to be relating a story, with his fullest attention upon what he is singing and not upon the impression he himself is creating. He arbitrarily prolongs whatever notes he chooses. His way of singing is as antiquated as the songs themselves.

Many of the present generation, having moved to mill towns and coal camps, are being cut off from their inheritance of traditional music. But they are beginning to make "ballets" of their own. Textile workers have songs to express sorrow and revolt. Coal miners are beginning to sing "blues" of their making. "The Hongry Miner's Blues" originated in the midst of the Harlan County terror. Most songs of the industrial sections express abject hopelessness and are howled in tones more woe-begone than the wails of Negro blues. They have, in fact, little in common with the older folk-songs sung in the hollows which coal mines and textile mills haven't yet invaded.

The White Top festival has grown from year to year, both in attendance and in the number of musicians assembled from far-off places. This year there was general agreement among the critics present that similar festivals should be encouraged in all the sections of the United States where a native art survives. At St. Louis, in February, there will be a national folk-music festival at which the White Top prize winners will compete with singers and dancers from other regions.

BRUCE CRAWFORD.

Labor and the N. R. A.

[*During the past few weeks an emphatic increase has been seen in the number of strikes and labor disputes. In July nearly 300 were reported, as compared with approximately forty in the same month a year ago. One has to go back nearly ten years to find a comparable period of labor activity. Greater efforts on the part of workers to improve conditions are to be expected, of course, in a period of rising business, but many of the disputes at present appear to be a direct outgrowth of the N.R.A. Strikes are being called to make effective the promise of better wages and shorter hours. For the convenience of our readers we summarize herewith some of the important developments of the past few days.*—THE EDITORS.]

Against the stubborn resistance of the coal, steel and automobile industries the N.R.A. has made, as yet, little real progress. The steel code, which has just been signed by the President, recognizes the workers' right to collective bargaining, but its wage and maximum-hour provisions are substantially those asked by the steel operators, which Secretary Frances Perkins has stated are entirely inadequate to bring about any real measure of recovery. The code, to be sure, is only for a ninety-day trial period. It is possible that the President may then use his power to raise wages and lower working hours. Meanwhile it is a trial on rather bad terms—except, of course, for the victory of the workers in the abolition of the compulsory open shop. How important is this victory depends upon the extent to which the government backs up the workers in administering the code.

The dressmakers' strike in the New York area exceeded even the expectations of the union leaders. The Dress and Waist Makers' Union had only about 20,000 members when the strike began, but some 60,000 walked out. No doubt this amazing demonstration of increased solidarity was a significant factor in the strike's speedy and, on the whole, satisfactory settlement. The workers obtained higher wages, a thirty-five hour week, and recognition of the union. More important, the jobbers and manufacturers agreed, as part of their responsibility under the N.R.A. code, to abolish sweatshop conditions.

One of the fruits of the shirtmakers' strike in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, which the National Labor Board has just settled successfully, may be the union of the United Garment Workers and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers under the A. F. of L. banner. The long-standing feud between the two unions came to a head in the Pottsville strike. Following the strike settlement, however, President William Green of the A. F. of L. announced that the jurisdictional dispute which had previously divided the two organizations had been terminated. Paving the way for the entrance of the Amalgamated, with its 100,000 members, into the A.F. of L., the agreement should greatly strengthen organized labor in this field, as well as establish a formula for the elimination of similar factional differences between unions in other fields.

In one of the first court decisions growing out of the N.R.A. codes, Circuit Judge Harry M. Fisher in Chicago supported the members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union who were on strike against the La Mode Garment Company. If conditions in a plant justify a walkout, he held, the employer is not entitled to an injunction restraining the striking workers from violence. In denying the La Mode company's plea for an injunction, Judge Fisher declared that the company officials had not come into court with clean hands and ordered them to abide by their N.R.A. code. This involved establishing a forty-hour week and a minimum weekly wage of $12.

After making a survey of the operation of the cotton-textile code, George L. Googe, personal representative of William Green in the South, transmitted 500 complaints of violations of the code to the N.R.A. The violations included the classing of experienced workers as learners, the use of the stretch-out system, discrimination against union laborers, and failure to pay overtime for maintenance employees. "No mills that I know of," said Mr. Googe, "are living up to the code as signed by the President."

Since early in July, approximately 5,000 technicians in the motion picture industry in Hollywood have been on strike. The original cause of the strike was the walkout of about 700 sound technicians, who demanded a twelve-hour day, a six-day week, and the enforcement of contracts which had been violated. Though both federal and state conciliators have reported to Washington that the strikers should be taken back under existing conditions, pending arbitration, the N.R.A. has thus far taken no action. The producers, though ostensibly supporting the N.R.A., have refused to arbitrate or to recognize the technicians' union.

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One of the most promising developments of the N.R.A. is the organization of white-collar workers in the South. According to a special dispatch to The New York Herald Tribune, about three thousand clerks and salespeople in the Atlanta region have joined the National Retail Clerks' Protective Association. The failure of many retailers to abide by the code has apparently aided the organization work considerably. The A. F. of L. reports that in four Southern communities local unions are organizing school teachers on a basis that will guarantee the teachers the right to bargain with successive boards of education.

Trouble has been brewing in the California fruit fields for several months, despite the drastic steps taken by local governmental officials to suppress efforts to organize the fruit workers. It flared up last week, at the peak of canning activity, in the strike of about 4,000 ranch and cannery workers in the northern part of the state. They are demanding pay of 30 cents per hour (the minimum established in the code for the canning industry), as against their present pay of 17½ cents, and an eight-hour day. With the ripened fruit in danger of spoiling, the California Packing Corporation has announced a wage increase to get the pickers back to work.

The efforts of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union to organize the employees of the Weather Pants Company in Corinth, Mississippi, came to an abrupt end last week. Three organizers of the union, who had been active among the company's workers, were accosted on the street and then "escorted to the Tennessee line by an undetermined number of men in two automobiles."

The strike of 12,000 shoe workers in Lynn, Massachusetts, ended last week in a victory for the workers. Under the auspices of the National Shoe Workers' Union they had gone out in protest against reduced pay brought about by a reduction of hours of work from forty-eight to forty a week. In the strike settlement the workers were granted a 20-percent increase in wages until September 15, when a one-year contract, drawn up by the Massachusetts Board of Arbitration, will go into effect. The agreement also establishes a closed shop.

CORRESPONDENCE

Poor Butterfly!

SIR: I should like to ask you for a favor. You have a poem of mine, "Danseuse," that you have had unpublished for many years. Now that I feel the rheums of approaching age, I can remember the glad young years when I wrote the masterpiece and spent the money you gave me for it.

I know it has had a happy life with you, humane treatment, good jail meals, exercise and occasional recreation. But now I am going to appeal to your better nature. Over and above feeling that the poor poem must by now have more than atoned for its criminal record and its flagrant conduct, it seems that a deluded publisher is bringing out a book of my poems on November 2, and couldn't you release that poor old bothering poem to let it join its brothers and sisters before the sun of its short life sets forever?

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

New York City.

[Mr. Benét's poem, about which he writes us so movingly, appears on page 66 of this issue. Lest other poets should be frightened off by the alarming state of affairs in The New Republic office suggested by his letter, which uses the license habitually awarded to a poet, it wasn't many years; it was only a few.—THE EDITORS.]

Soviet Bonds in the U.S.A.

SIR: The enclosed letter dealing with the issuance of Soviet Bonds in the United States may be of interest to your readers. The author, Mr. Lawrence Dennis, is of course a well known writer on international finance, author of the recent book, "Is Capitalism Doomed?" He has had a wide experience in the United States diplomatic service in Central America, and as a member of a New York investment-banking house.

New York City. MILES M. SHEROVER.

[ENCLOSURE]

Dear Mr. Sherover:

I want to tell you how much I am impressed by the first public offering of Soviet bonds in the United States (10,000,000 roubles). This offering is something of an event in the annals of investment finance and in the history of our relations with Soviet Russia. It is significant that the Soviet government should be offering to investors in capitalist America a sound gold-standard bond at a time when the United States is repudiating its gold-standard obligations and embarking on the uncharted seas of currency management and inflation.

American investors in dollar obligations are put on notice by law that they may expect a 50-percent devaluation of their capital and interest dues. And far-seeing investors must entertain grave apprehensions of an even greater eventual reduction of their capital in fixed dollar obligations, once the strong wine of inflation has been administered. Mr. Roosevelt has told the world that he believes in monetary manipulation to achieve and maintain an ideal level in prices. He undoubtedly recognizes that no price rise can go on forever and, therefore, aims at permanent prosperity on a higher price plane, once monetary manipulation has established it. But it is one thing to profess devotion to a given ideal in the use of certain measures and something else to achieve the ideal with those measures.

Mr. Roosevelt has threatened or promised inflation and devaluation. With these threats or promises he has stimulated speculative buying of securities, commodities and merchandise, and he has induced the speculative production of goods for subsequent sale at higher prices. This speculative buying and this producing of goods for warehouse inventories have raised prices. Mr. Roosevelt, however, must carry out the threats or promises of inflation and devaluation in order to justify and maintain the price levels created by speculation since March 4. These price levels cannot be maintained with the existing supply of labor and the present productive efficiency of industry unless there be war, socialistic expenditures on welfare or monetary inflation on an extravagant scale. Moreover, if, after the necessary inflation and devaluation steps to sustain the present Roosevelt price level have been taken, it should develop, as I predict, that the prosperity of speculative buying and monetary manipulation can only be enjoyed as long as prices are going up, then Mr. Roosevelt will be faced by the following two choices: (1) he must give the dollar another toboggan ride from fifty cents to zero or (2) he must allow the Hoover period of deflation to resume its course. Mr. Roosevelt will undoubtedly choose the further devaluation of the dollar before accepting a return to deflationary troubles.

We are assured, of course, that what we are to have is controlled inflation. But I share the view so pithily expressed by Professor Gregory of London that if we have control we shan't have inflation and if we have inflation we shan't have control. . . . The only question is whether bondholders will lose 100 percent as in the countries of the Triple Alliance and in Tsarist Russia or a lesser percentage as in France (80 percent) or England (now about 30 percent). In three months Mr. Roosevelt has debased the dollar 30 percent on world markets. The trouble with prosperity on the dollar toboggan is that there are only

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100 points to travel to reach zero. After a three months' ride we have only 70 points more to go.

Now the 10,000,000-rouble Soviet issue is made payable at the present gold parity of the rouble. This means, I take it, that interest and principal on these bonds will be paid not in gold, but in the equivalent of a permanently stipulated quantity of gold. I am neither naive enough nor sufficiently enamored of the Soviet (or any other) government to consider its pledge better intrinsically than the now broken pledge of the United States government. Certain considerations, however, indicate to me a strong probability that Soviet gold bonds, unlike American Liberty Bonds, will be redeemed in gold equivalent according to the pledge.

In the first place, the total outstanding amount of Soviet gold bonds is ridiculously small, being only a few million dollars. There is, therefore, no burden of gold debt accumulated during and since the war by Soviet Russia to be compared with that weighing on the capitalist nations. We, for instance, have about $40 billion of public debt, about half of which is that of the federal government and the other half that of the states, counties and cities. . . .

In the second place, the Soviet republics are not borrowing on gold obligations under the pressure of dire necessity. They could well get along without the little foreign borrowing they are doing. The principal purpose of these small foreign borrowings by the Soviet government seems to me to be that of acquiring foreign sympathizers who, having a slight financial stake in Russian stability and prosperity, might in an hour of need prove a friendly influence abroad. . . .

In the third place, and most important of all, it seems clear that Soviet borrowings of all sorts are made for an expansion of the productive plant of a nation in which the market for finished goods is guaranteed to an almost limitless extent by the fiat of a socialist state. The present-day borrowings of the capitalist states, on the other hand, including notably the borrowings of the United States, are not for new productive capital but to finance current government deficits, unemployment relief, and the postponement of defaults and bankruptcies by insolvent states, cities, railroads, banks and industrial corporations. The hundred odd millions, for instance, wangled out of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation for the savings banks of New York are not going to be used to build more houses or factories in New York but to make good the losses sustained by New York savings banks on loans for buildings which cannot now be rented or sold. A loan to Soviet Russia is used for expansion of productive capital in a land with an unlimited market guaranteed by state fiat. A loan in the capitalistic countries today is most unlikely to be productive, because the problem here seems to be thought of as one of curtailing production by shorter working hours rather than one of expanding consumption by socialistic expenditures.

And lastly, there are clear indications that the Soviet authorities are fully aware of the transfer problem and that they are refusing to incur foreign currency obligations in the future, the satisfaction of which they cannot readily meet from their exports. . . .

LAWRENCE DENNIS.

New York City.

Mr. Rorty Says It Won't Work

SIR: In my opinion, the present program for national recovery, unless substantially modified, will fail for the following specific reasons:

1. There are no substantial margins of industrial or business profits which can be diverted to wage payments. The corporation income-tax returns, after allowance for intercorporate duplications, show that the total of all corporation dividends amounts, on the average, to less than 6 percent of the national income. In spite of New Era illusions to the contrary, the opinion of those who have studied the question most carefully for years is that it is very questionable, after allowance for all losses, whether the real money invested in corporation equities earns even a normal (say 6-percent) interest, and there are many who believe that such real earnings average only from 3 to 4 percent.

2. There seem to be no further major efficiencies in production and distribution that have not already been effected under pressure of the existing depression, which can be brought about with sufficient rapidity to have any material influence on recovery. The accumulated gains in efficiency since 1929 (and the corresponding possibilities for gains in real wages) have probably amounted to about 7 percent—but further gains must apparently come at the established rate of from one to two percent per annum.

3. As the result of the preceding, it follows that increases in *hourly* wage rates, when in excess of the normal 7-percent gain since 1929, must be paralleled in due time and with substantial accuracy by increases in prices to consumers. The forced raising of price and wage levels may benefit debtors and may stimulate the speculative buying of commodities—but it can have no appreciable effect in increasing the net purchasing power of the average hourly earnings of all those, including farmers, who are gainfully employed.

4. The most fatal defect in the existing recovery plan arises, however, from the fact that, when the sales prices of non-durable consumers' goods are distributed among producers as profits, rents, salaries and wages, *it is certain that some profits, some rents, and some salaries and wages* will not in turn be spent for such goods. In other words, the shoemakers, the shirt-makers and the bakers, when fully employed at the highest conceivable wages, will turn out more shoes, shirts and bread than they themselves can consume—and an excess of such production (as is now becoming evident) will inevitably accumulate on the market, unless the workers on durable consumers' and capital goods (automobiles, construction work, machine tools, etc.), are employed and can take up their normal share of non-durable products.

5. To a limited extent, the preceding gap may be filled through wage payments on public works, but an excessive reliance on public works, besides failing to establish a normal balance of employment, may so injure public credit and wreck the confidence of investors as to prevent the restoration of that much more important volume of private construction and capital operations upon which a full recovery must ultimately depend.

I am only voicing the opinion of a large and growing number of well informed observers when I state that the present recovery plan is headed for disaster unless it frankly recognizes the fallacies which lie in the theory of increasing real purchasing power by means of arbitrary wage increases, and concentrates its efforts on a normal, but not excessive program of public works, and upon such further steps as may be necessary for a revival of private capital operations.

Lusby, Md. M. C. RORTY.

Extracts from Letters

SOL BECKER, writing for the Committee of Expelled and Suspended Students, wishes to let our readers know of the work which the Committee is doing to have the expelled students of City College, New York, reinstated. The Committee, which grew out of the expulsion of twenty-one and the suspension of nine students who took part in an anti-war demonstration, will also carry on educational work among college students directed against military training in colleges. Its address is 604 Bradford Street, Brooklyn, New York.

William Bloch points out in a letter to us that the basic principle of banking can be summarized in two sentences. The first sentence is: "The more any person needs bank credit, the less bank credit that person has!" And second: "The less any person needs bank credit the more bank credit that person has!"

A. Ginsberg considers Mary Heaton Vorse's article on the position of the Jews in Geramny to contain what is in effect an apology for Hitlerism. He summarizes her conclusions as follows: The Jews, being unwilling to perform manual labor, have cluttered up the professional fields; the same top-heavy condition exists in the United States; human nature being fundamentally base, Jews should take care not to arouse animal instincts by being content with manual labor. He considers the belief that human nature is fundamentally base to carry with it the belief that no one is to blame for the atrocities that have taken place.

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Men on Islands

Twenty Years A-Growing, by Maurice O'Sullivan. Rendered from the Irish by Moya Llewelyn Davies and George Thomson. New York: The Viking Press. 315 pages. $2.50.

IT IS an odd country, in truth, that in one period can produce two books so widely apart and yet so closely akin as O'Sullivan's "Twenty Years A-Growing," with the bloom of the youth of the world on it, and Joyce's "Ulysses," the last word in modernism in narrative. The Blasket Islander, except that he is a Christian, might be a native of one of Homer's islands for all he knows of European "progress" and "enlightenment." For all he knows of English literature, or the Anglo-Saxon inheritance, he might as well have been born into a world where these things did not exist at all. What sort of culture, then, has he, the curious reader will ask. Well, he has a fine culture—one to be envied—as good as or even better than the poet of the "Odyssey." He has been heir to one of the great mythologies of the world, the Celtic mythology; he was bred on the hero tales of Finn and the Fenians, of Cuchulain and Concobar, of Deirdre and the Sons of Usna; he knows the literature that exists in his own language, Irish—knows it by heart for the most part, for though, no doubt, he has read it, he has more often heard it repeated orally from people to whom poetry is not a thing to be read out of a printed book, but something to be said or sung, and a story is something to be told in the finest language at the teller's command to a chosen company of friends, and music is something to dance to, or sing to, or dream to. The author knew the great Munster poets by heart: the passionate poetry of Pierce Ferriter, who was hanged by Cromwell's soldiers—he devotes a chapter of this book to Pierce's Cave—the grave poetry of Egan O'Rahilly, as disciplined as the verse of Racine whose contemporary he was; the full-blooded poetry of Brian Merriman, author of "The Midnight Court," the sort of poetry that the present Irish censorship would deal with wrathfully. These are the poets he quotes in his book. He grew up among a people whose pastimes were story-telling, dancing, singing and conversation—and, occasionally, strong drink—a people who deeply loved their friends and kin in life and remembered them afterwards to the day of their own death. What better training could a writer have than thus to consort from childhood with his peers in emotional power and in love of the arts!

What makes the uniqueness of this narrative is, not as E. M. Forster says in his Introduction, that it is an inside account of neolithic civilization (whatever that may be), but that it is an inside account of a Gaelic civilization untouched by English, untouched, practically, by any outside culture except the Latin and Greek. Many of the subjects of O'Sullivan's chapters—weddings, wakes and dances, shipwrecks and races—have also been the subjects of other Irish writers and they have been made into pictures by Jack Yeats, but here they are dealt with by a writer innocent of English culture, who continues Gaelic literature from the point where the last Gaelic writer left off a long time ago, so that his book seems as if it came out of another world. The Blaskets seem as strange as the places Gulliver traveled to or Odysseus touched at. Says the wrecked sea-captain to the king of the islands, who is also the mail-carrier:

> "We thought then that it was some backward country with no one alive in it. But, upon my word," said he, glancing around, "you are here—fine, well favored people, mannerly, intelligent, generous and hospitable." "Indeed," said the King, "we are very thankful to you for the praise."

This is the language of an epic, and epic indeed is the story of all the ships that were wrecked off the island during the War. The catastrophe which brought misery to the rest of the world brought plenty and abundance to the Blaskets. "By God," one man would say, "war is good." For, when a ship went down, hit by a torpedo, the waves drove her cargo on shore or within reach of the islanders' curraghs—"nothing was bought; there was no need; it was to be had on the top of the water—flour, meat, lard, petrol, wax, margarine, wine in plenty, even shoes, stockings and clothes. Not a house in the Island but a storehouse was built beside it to keep the gatherings."

Boatloads of shipwrecked sailors made life a high excitement. When the crew of a submarined ship was seen approaching the Island in boats that had been tossing about for a week, looking for land, "Young and old were out on every clump of grass, some of the children running into hiding for fear of them, others jumping for joy; old pensioners who had not been able to leave the chimney-corners, came creeping to the door to see the sight." And they were well rewarded by the strange visages they saw, Italians and Chinamen and Negroes:

> "Achvan," said Shaun Michael, "isn't it a strange thing those wouldn't clean the coal from their faces?" "The devil, my lad," replied Mickil, "all the water in Thresher's Well wouldn't clean them, for it's not dirt that's on them but a black skin."

It would not seem at all strange to us to be told that a chapter called "The Wedding Day" was an account of happenings in the days of Homer. The youths and maidens, gay and laughing, troop down to the harbor to take their hide curraghs to the mainland where six weddings are being celebrated in one day. The chapter has all the sharp Celtic sensitivity to the sights and sounds of nature, and the author in the curragh with his sweetheart notes with high delight the wonders around the great cliff of Dunquin:

> Red weed and wrack-weed lying still on the sand; rocks all around us warming their pates in the sun; barnacles and periwinkles loosening their hold on the stones and creeping around at their leisure; little groups of crabs going out of their holes, a sea-raven and a diver standing on the reef with their wings outspread to seaward and their necks craned watching us.

This is exactly the same mind that is in the oldest known literature. At the house where the wedding was being celebrated there was good-fellowship, dancing, singing, diversion and drink. A dancer jumps to the middle of the floor to do a hornpipe, and there is a marvelous account of the dance in the traditional Irish way, motionless except from the knees downward:

> He took a goat's leap back into the middle of the floor. The musician struck up a hornpipe and the dancer beat it out faultlessly. It is wonderful feet he had, not a note of the music did he miss, as straight as a candle, not a stir of his body except down from his knees. . . . He gave the last kick, looked around and cried out:
>
> I am the broom from the top of Maurhan,
> And where is the man will beat out a step with me?

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It is all a life out of the Homeric age, except that the people are not adventurous—that is, perhaps, why they have survived to our time untouched by change; the great adventure is going to race or dance on the mainland, and a very spacious place does the mainland of Ireland appear to them, with wonderful towns—Ventry and Dunquin and Dingle East, but nevertheless the author is able to put Ireland in its place with regard to the Blaskets, and the whole world in its place with regard to both of them.

The translation is masterly; it would have been easy enough to have spoiled the book in English—a touch of Lady Gregory's Kiltartan or, worse than all, the Donn Byrne cadence, and this book probably would never have reached the outside world. One of the magical chapters tells how the writer was diverted from going to America by the coming to the Island of one of the translators of this book, who advised him instead to make the terrific journey to Dublin and join the Civic Guards. We tremble to think that if the author's chest had been an inch narrower, or his height an inch or two shorter than that terrible examiner at the Guards' Depot required, he might now be driving a New York subway train, striving in his off-hours to master the strange ways and the strange language, pushing Pierce Ferriter and the Munster poets out of his mind, and hearing no more "the lonely music of the wind in the leaves, a sound that would put a man deeply into thought." MARY M. COLUM.

Fable for Critics

The Tragedy of Russia: Impressions from a Brief Visit, by Will Durant. New York: Simon and Schuster. 164 pages. $1.25.

DESPITE the modest statement on the title page, this book really contains much more than "impressions from a brief visit." Indeed, out of the 164 pages, about 130 are not Dr. Durant's impressions at all. They are interwoven paraphrases from works of Seibert, Chamberlin, Eckardt, Levine, Calvin Hoover, Elisha Friedman and similar real and pretended experts on the Soviet Union. About three-fourths of the book could have been written before the author ever boarded the boat. His flying visit simply added a note of "authenticity" to his articles for The Saturday Evening Post—in the course of which Dr. Durant never took the trouble to acknowledge the sources of "his" observations.

People who have a thorough knowledge of Soviet culture and have spent years in intimate contact with the Russian folk would hesitate to speak so knowingly of the marital relations, the youth, the literature, the drama, the sciences, the economics, of the Soviet Union. It would take a volume to pin down all the misstatements, contradictions, irrelevancies, insincerities and downright prevarications piled up in this slight essay. One example will suffice. If instead of quoting the equally prejudiced remarks of other Soviet enemies such as Seibert, Levine, etc., Mr. Durant had 'phoned the New York Public Library, Slavonic Department, and asked for the list of foreign writers translated into Russian, he might have modified the sentence on page 81 which runs: "Only such foreign authors . . . are translated as denounce Europe and America and uphold the socialist point of view." In the year 1932 alone Russian translations appeared of such violent socialist propagandists as Goethe and Jim Tully, Molière and Eugene O'Neill, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Shakespeare, Liam O'Flaherty, Henry Ford and some thirty others.

Instead of quoting further misstatements I should like to repeat an old Russian fable entitled "The Critic." The fable ran like this:

A shepherd boy, guarding his flock on a hill, was gazing wonderingly at a castle in the valley below, when he saw a pig come rooting around the corner of the wall, up to the very gate, and go in. The pig was a friend of the boy's, so when—after a long time—he reappeared, the boy called to him to ask him what he had seen.

"Why?" asked the pig. "I didn't see anything much."

"Oh," said the boy, disappointed, "I've heard that it is beautiful in there; that there are great tapestries on the walls, richly carved furniture, magnificent silverware and —and—you've seen it all! Tell me about it! Tell me all that you saw."

The pig reflected a moment, then shook his head and said:

"Why, Shepherd, I didn't see anything beautiful. I rooted around everywhere, but all I got was garbage, and not enough of that." LINCOLN STEFFENS.

Primitives in Action

Life in Lesu, by Hortense Powdermaker. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 352 pages. $4.

THE YOUNGER generation of anthropologists is bringing life into the study of primitive communities. Whether in the name of "functional anthropology," a term introduced by Bronislaw Malinowski, or under some other flag, the modern field worker is keen about action; he wants to know what primitives do—also how they feel about doing or not doing certain things. In the second place he is ever on the alert to point out the underlying similarity of human nature, as between moderns and primitives. Cultural patterns will differ, often strikingly, but man with his urges, emotions and thinking remains the same, everywhere essentially man.

Special interest attaches to Miss Powdermaker's South Sea study because she was alone, a modern woman studying, primarily, primitive women. She took this aspect of her task so seriously that on several occasions opportunities of obtaining information from the men were neglected for fear that the author's deliberate immersion in the company of her own sex might be frustrated. A wise policy this, in view of the sharp sex division at Lesu, one of the five villages on New Ireland in which the author spent most of the ten months of her field trip. The day's work here is neatly divided between male and female: the men clear the ground for a garden and build the fence; they plant the trees and get the sago, fish, hunt the wild pig, cut firewood and make the fire; they prepare pig, fish and sago for cooking, build and repair the houses, make the masks, canoes, fishing nets, spears, ornaments. Men also carve and paint the *malanggans,* ritualistic objects used at mortuary ceremonies, which are taboo to women. The economic and domestic functions of the latter are similarly circumscribed.

At Lesu, as in most primitive communities, cultural pattern reigns supreme. But there are exceptions, as the author takes pains to point out. There is, for example, Maerabit, the Lesu woman who persists in breaking established conventions in dancing. She "rushes on the scene beating a drum, circles around the dancers, and goes through many absurd antics, maintaining a serious countenance at the same time . . . the audience greets her antics with shouts of appreciative laughter." In this case, in fact, the "deviation" is so marked that I am led to suspect the author of having

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overlooked something. May it not be that Maerabit, while breaking the usual dancing forms, is herself the embodiment of a cultural pattern, namely that of a jester or clown whose function it is to differ from the pattern? But there are other instances of heresy, less questionable. The inheritance of property in Lesu is maternal, a state of affairs which usually brings to the fore the mother's brother, who may loom above one's own father. But cases are on record where things or rites have been handed down from father to child, in response to an impulse which transcends the mores of one society or even of one kind of culture.

The sexual standards of Lesu seem, at first blush, to differ thoroughly from our own. Not only is there sexual freedom of men and women before marriage, but both wife and husband carry on more or less secret affairs without arousing either social censure or that of their legitimate spouses. As a rule, that is, for once again there are exceptions. It will happen that a particular wife or husband will become jealous and act accordingly. If the wife is the offender, her "lord and master" may, in such a case, administer a sound thrashing. Wife-beating is a well established custom in Lesu, and, if done in moderation, is accepted good-naturedly by members of both sexes.

All in all, Miss Powdermaker deserves credit for her courage and for having drawn a convincing and not unpleasing picture of a society well adapted to its environment and better adjusted to itself than the more civilized societies seem to be. ALEXANDER GOLDENWEISER.

A History of Capitalism

A History of the Economic Institutions of Modern Europe, by Frederick L. Nussbaum. New York: F. S. Crofts and Company. 464 pages. $4.50.

AVOWEDLY based on the six large volumes of Werner Sombart's famous work, "Modern Capitalism," this book offers a concise general introduction to the economic history of the modern world. After a brief description of medieval economy, it sets forth the developments of a technical, economic, political and social-psychological nature which favored the rise of a capitalistic economy. The progress of capitalism is divided into two main eras: the era of "early" capitalism, from the fifteenth century to the industrial revolution, and of the era of "high" or dominant capitalism, which generally coincides with the nineteenth century and ends with the outbreak of the World War. The error into which so many recent American writers on economic history have fallen, the identification of capitalism with the technique of machine production (*i. e.*, of capitalism in general with "high" capitalism), is thus avoided, yet capitalism is conceived as having a definite beginning in time, and hence as destined to have a definite end. This conception may be Marxian or Spenglerian (although Spengler is by no means the originator of the idea which is now generally ascribed to him); Professor Nussbaum seems to waver between the two.

In general, his attitude toward Marx, like that of Sombart his master, presents something of a problem. To give but one instance: Marx is spoken of as having "discovered capitalism for science in the nineteenth century." But when the question is raised, What is the explanation for the extraordinary outburst of technical invention in the era of high capitalism? we get the answer that "really it is possible only to go back one step or so, and the problem of essential cause remains insoluble." Yet Marx's concept of surplus value, his greatest contribution to the science of capitalist economy, offers a most adequate explanation of this unique historical phenomenon. Moreover, this explanation is in complete accord with Sombart's and Nussbaum's historical account of capitalism, which indeed is largely derived from Marx's work, or has been greatly influenced by it.

Numerous phenomena are adduced to indicate that capitalist economy may be now approaching its old age, though not its end. The disrepute into which unrestricted competition is now falling, whereas in earlier phases of capitalism competition was looked upon as "the life of trade," is one of these. The statement that through the network of stock-company control, three to four hundred men are said to manage the whole economic life of Europe and America, is certainly impressive. Likewise, Walter Rathenau's proposal to organize the entire German economy into a single great corporation could certainly not have been made at an earlier stage, and is indicative of a great change in social psychology, which is itself an expression of a corresponding change in social organization and social need. But it seems to me not quite so certain that Mr. Ford's dictum, that "saving is economically disadvantageous," is a similar indicator. To be sure, it runs counter to the psychology of early and later capitalism, in which saving was one of the highest virtues. But Mr. Ford is a producer of consumer's goods, and his economic interest therefore demands that the workers receive high wages and that they spend them immediately.

Sombart, and Nussbaum after him, lay considerable stress on the role of the Jews in the development of capitalism. The statement that in Germany before the War, 13.3 percent of the directors of industrial enterprises were Jewish, although the Jews formed only about one percent of the population, offers a partial explanation of the rage of Hitler, and of the ruined middle class that constitutes the bulk of his original following, against the Jews. As a curious contrast, we are told that in the eleventh century the bishop of Speyer wrote: "When I decided to make a city out of Speyer, I felt that it would multiply a thousand times the distinction of the place if I would collect Jews there." HERMAN SIMPSON.

Drunkard of Genius

James Boswell, by C. E. Vulliamy. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 285 pages. $2.75.

THIS IS a rather short account of Boswell of Auchinleck, considering how prolific was our beloved madman of English letters himself; yet very workmanlike and of very substantial documentation. It is packed with abundant, astonishing new material, drawn in part from the able investigations of recent scholars, such as Professor C. B. Tinker, but based more largely on the Boswell manuscripts acquired some years ago by Colonel Ralph Isham from the buried treasury of Malahide Castle. Though Mr. Vulliamy, an English biographer, does not soar like Boswell himself, his book is pointed, spirited and meaty, and marks an advance over his earlier, somewhat pedestrian studies of eighteenth-century characters.

It is not easy to characterize such a disturbing, baffling and continually surprising person as Boswell. His evident madness, debauchery and drunkenness have been concealed from all schoolboys far too long. His oft professed "melancholy" seems more genuine today; he had terrible mornings-after of moral degradation all his life. And we are deeply impressed at perceiving finally that the marvelous "Life

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of Johnson" was worked out by an habitual drunkard over a long period of years. The triumph, the genius, of his magnum opus had something to do with Boswell's cracked, tormented and yet hilarious nature.

Mr. Vulliamy, while moralizing perhaps a shade too much, fails to measure Boswell's true worth as a master of English prose at a time when language and style were infinitely purer or more crystalized than today. Boswell wrote naturally, effortlessly, as he confessed himself; his unpublished writings are studded with the direct, intuitive hits which make the "Johnson" so inimitable. But his life itself—as attested by the private papers, more of which will soon be appearing here—is an unending (and side-twisting) source of moral instruction.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON.

Pre-Hitler Functionalism

The New Vision, by L. Moholy-Nagy. Translated by Daphne Hoffman. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 191 pages, illustrated. $5.

"THE NEW VISION" offers a "leftist" interpretation of the ideals that animated the Dessau Bauhaus Academy before the doors of this famous experimental laboratory, originally founded at Weimar by Walter Gropius, were closed by Nazi decree, and its instructors—many of them internationally known painters, sculptors and architects—left to shift for themselves. The workshops that once vibrated with the shuttle-slaps of busy hand looms, the large lecture halls without a trace of the teacher-student atmosphere, the glass-enclosed corridors where students idled during classes or knotted into small gesticulating groups—all this is now as hopelessly part of the past as that worthless scrap of parchment, the Weimar Constitution.

But while it lasted—and it lasted long enough to leave its imprint on the artistic habits and tastes of our generation—the Bauhaus was a unique institution, and despite the Marxists' complaint, in part justified, that its half-hearted liberalism carried the seeds of its own dissolution, it was a formidable influence for the good. Moholy-Nagy was one of the persons who helped make it so. He was a staff lecturer at the Bauhaus for five years; and this experience, coupled with a first-hand knowledge of many creative media—he is, among other things, a competent painter and sculptor, and an excellent photographer—provided him with the material and human equipment for evolving a methodology towards "a new understanding of form on the basis of the changed technical, economic and social conditions." This book is, therefore, not a collection of haphazard notations, but a clearly defined and fully developed body of esthetic doctrine.

It is, in fact, the first digest of the functionalist esthetic (German brand), as applied to the contemporary arts and crafts, to be published in this country. The four divisions of the book represent the four stages of training in "plastic handling" through which the Bauhaus student passes before he becomes a full-fledged functionalist. As a corrective to overspecialization and the intuitive or conventionalized use of materials, the student is grounded in every field of sensory activity by means of rudimentary tactile exercises (many of these exercises illustrate the text). All the basic possibilities of materials are exploited before being subjectively utilized.

"Today," writes Moholy-Nagy, "the creative problem is mainly one of finding a form adequate for the content." He pays special tribute to Picasso and the Cubists for respecting this principle and for recognizing that each material (oil, tempera, etc.) must be handled differently without regard to subject matter. This is followed by an analysis of Sculpture (*e.g.*, Volume), which is reduced to five categories; the last stage, "kinetic" or moving sculpture, Moholy-Nagy regards as the sculpture of the future. All these stages are clearly defined and amply illustrated from contemporary works by Lipschitz, Brancusi, Archipenko, Schlemmer, Vantongerloo, Moholy-Nagy, various Bauhaus students and the Russian Constructivists. The last chapter is given over to the consideration of Architecture (*e.g.*, Space). The only buildings that have any architectural validity, asserts Moholy-Nagy, are those which permit the surroundings to flow into them. Glass architecture, he contends, is best adapted to this end.

Moholy-Nagy, like all prophets of a new creed, is inclined to exaggerate the importance of functionalism. He raises it from a principle, which all craftsmen should be taught to respect, to a religion. But if he overstates his case, it is because he realizes, perhaps more keenly than most of us do, that the time has come when artist and artisan alike must take stock of the world they live in and create art forms that are faithful expressions of that world. Whether the functionalist procedure has had as salutary an effect on painters and sculptors as it has had on craftsmen is a moot point. By stressing the intellectual element, Moholy-Nagy is placing a dangerous weapon in the hands of the untrained student. This is likely to lead—and there are already signs of it—to a new kind of academicism.

E. M. BENSON.

Book Notes

BELLES LETTRES

AS THE SUN SHINES, by Henry Williamson. *New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 491 pages. $2.95.*

Defying classification, this ingratiating and exquisitely phrased sequel to Mr. Williamson's "Village Book" is neither fancy nor fact, and at the same time it is both. Mr. Williamson himself calls it a "true but imaginary local history" of Ham, a village in Devonshire, where the author observes and writes. Although there is little doubt that every character in the book is a real person, there is no more doubt that every sketch and scene and story is heavily dependent upon fiction's artifices. Mr. Williamson as a writer is almost a perfect executor of his intentions; his mastery has so unfailingly increased with every new book that now "As the Sun Shines" becomes an indispensable study—and pleasure!—for anyone who would know the English villager and yokel, of whom Hardy and Powys have written more dramatically but no more cogently.

LUDWIG LEWISOHN: The Artist and His Message, by Adolph Gillis. *New York: Duffield and Green. 110 pages. $1.50.*

Mr. Gillis sympathetically appraises Ludwig Lewisohn as a literary artist and, while regretting that his autobiographical tendency has prevented his reaching that place as a creative novelist to which his natural gifts might have led him, recognizes with well expressed enthusiasm the very real social value of such confessions as "Upstream" and "Mid-Channel." Ardent always in the cause of truth and beauty in art and of the human rights of man, Lewisohn has, since his return to Judaism some ten years ago, confused his inspiration with his concern about the Jewish problem to such an unhappy extent that he is now inclined, in his insistence that the Jew must be solely and belligerently the unassimilable Jew, to see all Jews as Messiahs, all gentiles as unheroic. Anti-Semitism is not the whole influence upon the Jews; "there are other joys and tragedies in Israel," Mr. Gillis gently points out, "and it is time for Lewisohn to see them."

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Biography

BULA MATARI: Stanley, Conquerer of a Continent, by Jacob Wassermann. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. *New York: Liveright, Inc. 349 pages. $3.*

Henry M. Stanley came from England to America a few years before the Civil War. Combined with his cardinal passion for action and his qualities of leadership and endurance, he had a dash of the old conquistador spirit, emerging as the newspaperman's lust to scoop the world. When James Gordon Bennett sent him to Africa to find Livingstone, the assignment made him famous and brought him for the first time to an environment—savage and hostile as it then was—to which he returned again and again. He believed in civilization and the myth of the superior race, picturing an Africa opened up for Christian progress and industrialism. He found a backer in Leopold of Belgium, starting the process of exploitation that has gone on ever since. He was really the trail-blazer of modern imperialism, unable to visualize the results of the work he performed, incapable of seeing that his "civilization" meant the degradation of a native people while foreign nations extracted their millions in diamonds, rubber and gold. The biographer's greatest service has been to link the material in Stanley's various volumes—which, with the classic "Autobiography," have definite literary value—and to tell the story over. For the rest, Wassermann submits his own conception of Stanley, based not on new findings, but on quite arbitrary readings of Stanley's texts. What *may* hide between the lines, what *may* have been left unsaid—that troubles Wassermann and raises in his mind a mystic question as long and crooked as the Congo.

Economics

FACING THE FACTS: An Economic Diagnosis, edited by J. G. Smith. *New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 383 pages. $3.*

Within the limitations imposed upon themselves, the authors of this symposium have written an extremely honest book and one which, since it is unofficially at least a Princeton product, should have a wide influence. The major limitation is this: while recognizing that our plutocratically controlled representative democracy is faced with revolutionary alternatives of the left and the right, Communism and Fascism, it has apparently been agreed to discuss the great problems confronting us within the framework of the present system. No major problem is without its chapter and no chapter is without its telling points, striking criticism, damaging admissions. The gold standard is discussed by E. W. Kemmerer, who concludes that it is firmly established in the United States and that it is the best possible standard available. He makes the point that it is, and has been for some time, a managed standard. H. L. Lutz strongly recommends a method whereby periods of prosperity may be used to lay aside a surplus for periods of adversity. F. W. Fetter argues that the tariff has ceased to be a matter of revenue and a way of controlling our national economic development and has become entangled in quite another issue: shall our economy be controlled by nationalistic or internationalistic ideals? One essay which deserves special commendation is F. A. Fetter's on "Big Business and the Nation." Professor Fetter inquires into the motive for concentration and, rejecting the efficiency plea, says bluntly that "one of the chief motives for mergers" is to "get higher prices." Rugged individualism gets short shrift from all these Princeton professors; Fetter remarks that "monopolistic conditions rather than free markets prevail in most of the great standardized industries of America." The upshot is that we are living in a society which is financially controlled to "intercept the gains of economic progress by means of higher prices to consumers and of financial rewards to insiders, thus keeping the fruits of science and technology from passing on to the people."

Fiction

THE PROGRESS OF JULIUS, by Daphne du Maurier. *New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.*

As a youth in Algeria, Julius Levy mastered the art of hurting others without hurting himself, taking what he wanted and destroying whatever was in the way. Emigrating to England

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because someone told him it was "a nation of fools," he applied his philosophy of "something for nothing" with marvelous success, and in a short time had encircled the island with a chain of restaurants that made him the richest man in the country. So long as he confined himself to financial ventures he was a dazzling magician whose cleverness was too much for most people. But as soon as he began to tinker with his own emotions and allow himself the indulgence of caring sincerely for another human being, he became his own destroyer. "The Progress of Julius" is a memorable portrait of a millionaire who is compelled to look over his pile of money, into what other horizons.

THE WOODEN DOCTOR, by Margiad Evans. *Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.*

The "wooden doctor" is more an influence than a character in this strange confession—which, Miss Evans avers, is fiction. From the author's description, the features of her lovesick Arabella Warden so match the photograph on the back of the jacket that the reader is constrained, shall we say, to blush for the heroine's shortcomings. Made an emotional recluse by her hopeless love for a doctor thirty years older, Arabella mopes her way through ten years to the conclusion that hopelessness is her fate. The incidents of these unhappy years are set down in illuminating and vigorous phrases, and "The Wooden Doctor" is beautiful as well as uncomfortable—but it is impossible to determine from Miss Evans' peculiarly personal book whether her talent is based soundly upon a gift for writing or insecurely upon an instinct for self-revelation.

Contributors

ALEXANDER SACHS is Director of the Division of Research and Planning of the National Recovery Administration.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT, whose novels and poems are well known, is one of the editors of The Saturday Review of Literature and conducts a column of literary comment for that magazine. Duffield and Green will publish a new volume of his poems, "Starry Harness," late this fall.

ALLEN TATE, the author of two volumes of verse and two biographies, is now living in Tennessee, where he is at work on a book dealing with the historical background of modern American society.

BRUCE CRAWFORD is the editor of Crawford's Weekly, Norton, Virginia, a town high in the mountains at the southwest tip of Virginia. During the Harlan coal strike of 1931, Mr. Crawford reported some of the shootings with such accuracy that he was presently shot and wounded himself.

MARY M. COLUM has contributed many reviews and critical articles to American literary publications.

LINCOLN STEFFENS, whose biography, published a short time ago by Harcourt, Brace, described in detail his adventurous career as a journalist, editor and liberal, is now living in Carmel, California.

ALEXANDER GOLDENWEISER, professor of Thought and Culture at the University of Oregon, is the author of several volumes on anthropology, two of the most recent being, "Robots or Gods" and "History, Psychology and Culture," both of which were published by Alfred A. Knopf.

HERMAN SIMPSON, a student of Marxist theory, was formerly editor of the Socialist daily, The New York Call. He contributed a chapter to the recent symposium, "Recovery through Revolution."

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON, author of biographies of Zola and Rousseau and of a book of critical studies of American literary expatriates, is now completing a book dealing with the rise of the great American capitalists.

E. M. BENSON is now in Vermont working on a series of studies of contemporary painters and sculptors and little known phases of their work. Several of these have been published in the magazines Parnassus and Creative Art.

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